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UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

The Japanese expansionism in Asia and the Italian expansion in Africa: A comparative study of the early Italian and Japanese colonialism

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Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia

Corso di laurea in STORIA DELL'EUROPA

Candidato

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Relatore

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1. Introduction

In the 1850s the Italians and Japanese, not having consolidated their modern states yet, were witnessing as mere spectators, the industrialization, the explorations, the achievements and the strengthening of the rest of the protagonists in the geopolitical chessboard. Developments that most certainly caused them restlessness and anxiety. The goal of the current study is to highlight the nature and to outline the origins of the Japanese colonialism by comparing it with the Italian one. The collation with the European colonialism in general would be inappropriate on the grounds that each Great Power moved differently in the colonial arena according to its interests and aspirations. For this reason, I chose the comparison with the Italian equivalent phenomenon with which, I am convinced that it shares many common and perhaps largely unknown elements. The two phenomena naturally encompass interesting differences as well, the highlighting of which will help the deeper understanding of the birth, the development and the causes of the early Japanese and Italian colonialism. It should not be disregarded that the developments and the political-social fermentations of the period immediately after the establishment of the two states, after the Meiji restoration in Japan (1868) and after the unification of the Italian state (1871), formed ideologically and practically the basis of the two nations' imperialist development until the Second World War. The subsequent similar course of two newly formed (latecomers) states, their totalitarian political system during the interwar era, their alliance in two world wars, the defeat, the resulting democratization and the economic miracle they performed after 1945 attest to a remarkable unison and a common historical evolution, the axis of which were laid in the last quarter of the 19th century. Studying therefore this period, the aim is, tracing behind the two nations' obvious cultural and social differences, to highlight the common ground of their colonial policy. In this context, the events that led to the formation of the first colonies, Taiwan (1895) for Japan and Eritrea (1890) for Italy and the comparison of these early experiences are crucial for the comprehension of their later imperialistic structure. Hopefully this thesis can make a small contribution to understanding 19th century colonialism in general.

Japan and Italy were formed in the same period, the period of the New Imperialism, a time of diplomatic mistrust, protectionism, frenetic colonial and economic rivalry and of militarism, when the Great Powers (British Empire, the French Third Republic and the Russian Empire) had already established their hegemonic position in the world. Japan and Italy at the end of the 19th century were in need of stability, internal and external security, economic reorganization and immediate settlement of the economic and social problems arising from the rapid increase of their population.¹ Furthermore, seeking to compete on an equal footing

¹ Many Meiji intellectuals were monitoring with sympathy the situation of the newborn Italian State noticing an "essential likeness" in the challenges these two nations were facing. See Fusatoshi Fujisawa,

with the Powers of the era, claiming a place in the sun, they considered modernization and rapid industrialization as the only way forward. These facts as well as the policy of expansion that they partly adopted for the resolution of these issues are unique and particular. The phenomenon of the early Japanese colonialism in relation to that of the other states is intensely reminiscent, as to the origins and aspirations, of the corresponding Italian one. Its collation with that of Britain's or Germany's, the two superpowers at the time, would be inappropriate.

Contrary to Lenin's theory about the unbreakable relationship between imperialism and the export of surplus capital, in the dawn of their colonial adventure, Japan and Italy had difficulty in luring domestic capital into colonial investment since they had a shortage not an excess of private capital. Despite their feeble fiscal position however, immediately after their formation, they inaugurated a policy of expansion. It was then presumed by the respective ruling classes that the participation in the colonial game would be panacea, it would, as if by magic, form the lever that would topple and nullify their disadvantageous geopolitical position abroad and would resolve the economic and social problems of vital importance that beset them in the interior. This consideration, this common perception, these convictions which were shared by politicians, merchants, industrialists and military simultaneously in two regions of the world so remote and alienated between them provoke the interest of the scholar.

Both states fearing their exclusion from the markets, their pushing aside from the international developments, their marginalisation and their conversion into supernumeraries in the era of the chaotic imperialist struggle, envisaged in their own colonial expansion their strategic security and survival. They both viewed military victories and territorial expansion as the shortest way to obtain a place in the sun. Thus, even if they had not achieved the degree of industrialization and of economic development of the more powerful states, still being weak and agrarian, they attempted to ensure their position in the world through colonies and trade. The problem of their economic backwardness and military weakness was causing insecurity and stress even when they were achieving successes. The expansion and the establishment of spheres of influence constituted a necessity for the survival of the nation. The possession of colonies would present to the world a powerful, prestigious and modern Italy and Japan, arbiters of developments and, in addition, it would contribute to the stability of the international system. So they participated in the colonial struggle imitating the imperialist powers.

The international, mainly the British, historiography has among others ignored the origins of the Italian and Japanese presence overseas. The early Italian colonial venture was geographically more limited compared with the French and the British

"Giuseppe Mazzini e l'Asia", *The Journal of Humanities and Natural Sciences*, n. 122 (Nov., 2009), p. 58.

ones.² So was the Japanese one. They also did not last as long as that of the other Powers as they ended earlier (de facto in 1941, de jure with the Treaty of Paris on 10 February 1947 for Italy and 1945 for the Japanese case).³ The majority of the studies relating to the Japanese and Italian expansion are referring principally to the 1930s-1940s period when the first invaded Manchuria and the later Ethiopia.⁴ Obviously researchers find these events, closely related to the outbreak of the Second World War, more fascinating and thus have been neglecting, in the writer's humble opinion, the first crucial steps that paved the way for this expansion. The indifference about the issue and its pushing aside by historians such as Hobson is not explained only by its limited temporal and geographic scope. Lenin and other Marxist and non-Marxist researchers, identified imperialism with monopoly capitalism, expansionism with industrialization, colonialism with the export of capital, subjugation with the economic deprivation and exploitation of underdeveloped peoples.⁵ Seen in this light the Italian and Japanese cases constitute the exception to the rule. The unavailability of investment funds, the disconnect between industrialization and expansionism, the ultimately limited dynamic of the Italian and Japanese economies in the late 19th century prompted the researchers to overlook and ignore the issue. The economic weakness behind their colonial project does not mean of course that the phenomenon did not have a serious socio-political impact on Africans, Asians and Italians or that it does not require investigation.

² Paolo Jedlowski, "Memories of the Italian colonial past", *International Social Science Journal*, 62/203-204, (Mar.-June, 2011), p. 37.

³ With this treaty, which was imposed by the victorious Allies, Italy, among others, recognised the independence of Ethiopia and withdrew its claims from Libya, Somalia and Eritrea. By that time the new liberal government and in particular Alcide De Gasperi (1881-1954) was asking for their return. In 1951 Libya became an independent and sovereign state. A year later Eritrea gained its autonomy and formed with Ethiopia a federal state. The United Nations entrusted Italy with just the ten-year administration of Somalia (1950-1960) aiming to gradually achieve self-government and ultimately independence for the country. See Angelo Del Boca, "Myths, suppressions, denials, defaults," in *A place in the sun, Africa in Italian colonial culture from post-unification to the present*, ed. P. Palumbo, (London-Los Angeles-Berkeley, 2003), pp. 20-21. Japanese control over Taiwan, Korea, Manchuria and other Asian and Pacific regions, conquered prior and during the Second World War, explicitly ended upon the Potsdam Declaration and the subsequent signing of the Empire's formal surrender on September 2, 1945. The abrupt deconstruction of the Italian and Japanese Empires meant that these nations did not concern themselves with the procedures of decolonization or the responsibility of their former actions. This fact partially explains the intellectual immaturity, aloofness, awkwardness or in many cases the systematic downplaying of their colonial history in school textbooks and literature alike. Nationalistic denial of exploitation and past war crimes or the portrayal of Italian and Japanese colonial rule as more "lenient" in relation to that of the other imperialistic powers are very much present to this day. See Peter Cave, "Japanese Colonialism and the Asia-Pacific War in Japan's History Textbooks: Changing representations and their causes" in *Modern Asian Studies* Vol. 47, No.2 (Mar. 2013), pp. 543-545.

⁴ For Andall and other historians, certain aspects of Italy's overseas expansion are yet to be examined. See Jacqueline Andall, "Italian Colonialism: Historical Perspectives Introduction", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 8/3, (Nov., 2010), pp. 371-372.

⁵ Tom Kemp, "The Marxist Theory of Imperialism" in *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism*, ed. R. Owen, B. Sutcliff, (London, 1972), p. 22.

What was the ideological background that steered Meiji Japan's and early Italy's ruling classes to expand in the Asian mainland and Africa respectively? How did the expansionist tendencies, the incentives and the ulterior motives of their colonialisms take place in the end of the 19th century? What was the attitude of the Catholic Church towards the Italian counterpart? Did the state religion of Shintō and the worship of the emperor played an analogous role in the 19th century Japan? If it did, in what extent? Many scholars trace a common ideological and historical course as late as the interwar period. The competitiveness and unjustness of the international system, which put Italy and Japan in its margin, the aversion to democratic ideas and the shift towards more radical and authoritative norms are well documented. Aiming at capsizing their precarious situation both states espoused chauvinistic and militaristic doctrines as Dr. Reto Hofmann brilliantly analyzes in his book *The Fascist effect, Japan and Italy, 1915-1952*. Japan's and Italy's late formation, their interwar world domination aspirations and embracement of authoritarian ideologies and their democratization as a result of the end of the Second World War are taken for granted by many modern history experts⁶. No study thought seems to address Japan's and Italy's "natural" and self-evident resort to aggressive expansion, absolutism and militarism in the 20th century as means of national self-approbation and property. Why did these particular states turn to imperialism instinctively? Why did they belong to these nations that felt threatened and obliged to violently overturn the 20th century status quo? Could we possibly detect in the first phase of their modern evolution some common disposition towards the subjection of other nations and belligerent eagerness? Are the Japanese and Italian modern nations inherently "imperialistic" or their strive for domination is a reasonable byproduct of well established colonial practices amidst an acutely antagonistic natural order? A parallel and deeper understanding of the 19th century socio-cultural-psychological parameters, such as tradition, mentality and religion that shaped and explain the later ideological framework of Rome's and Tōkyō's expansionist disposition has never been attempted. W. Beasley's and K. Hayman's remarkable studies on Japanese imperialism associated the phenomenon with the German one, failing in the author's opinion to also note the similar, to some extent, economic-military but especially cognitive conditions deriving from analogous geopolitical considerations and anxiety. By simply ignoring,

⁶ Whether or not Japan in the 1930s demonstrated the characteristics of a typical Fascist regime is still a heated matter of debate among the historians. However, this issue will not be addressed in this dissertation. For a more comprehensive and in-depth study on the subject see the following readings: Moore Barrington, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*, Boston 1966, Arendt Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism; new edition with added prefaces*, San Diego-New York, 1979, Duus Peter and Okimoto I. Daniel "Fascism and the History of Pre-War Japan: The Failure of a Concept," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 1, Nov., 1979, pp. 65-76, Harootunian Harry, *Overcome by Modernity History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan*, Princeton 2000, Dower W. John, *Origins of the modern Japanese state: selected writings of E. H. Norman*, New York, 1975, Harootunian Harry, "Constitutive Ambiguities: The Persistence of Modernism and Fascism in Japan's Modern History" in *The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, edited by Alan Tasman, Durham-London 2009, pp. 80-114, Martin Bernd, *Japan and Germany in the Modern World*, Oxford, 1995.

as many others, the Italian counterpart, the obviously most resembling one, they chose the second-best paradigm.

The unique work of J. S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India*, in which he successfully confronted the British and Dutch rule on Burma and Indonesia respectively demonstrates that a seemingly unrelated comparison of experiences can indeed be fruitful and valid. The dissertation's starting-point could not be any other but the date of Japan's and Italy's founding; the modern nation states were more efficient in promoting centralized administration, economic unity, and national policies. Its chronological end-point is the end of the Boxer rebellion in 1901. This development marks a shared meeting point in the same time and place for the two phenomena. Collaborating, with the Great Powers in search of a new elevated international status pushed these still secondary states to participate in the subduing of the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901). In the first introductory chapter, there will be a brief examination of the theories and trends that drove the most potent nations of the world to seek colonies in the 19th century. The thesis will then investigate Italy's and Japan's early colonial policies in two parts. The first part will shed some light on Italy's political and financial situation after the unification as well as its foreign relations, the nation's colonial legacy, and finally its standing in the geopolitically crucial Mediterranean Basin. Examining these developments will help the reader understand the ideology and the factors that urged Italy towards expansion in Africa. The occupation of African lands and the subsequent formation of the first Italian colony, Eritrea and its administration will follow thereafter. Finally, in the last chapter, the Italian presence in the Far East during the turn of the century will be presented. Accordingly, the second part dedicated to Japan, will start with examining the nation's military, economic and social conditions in the aftermath of the Restoration. Next, Japanese expansionist tendencies will be studied as well as the origins, reasoning and the ideologies behind them. The establishment of Japan's first colony, Taiwan will follow as the thesis presents the country's standing in the Far East, its major area of interest. The final chapter of the second part will examine Tōkyō's policy in the Asian mainland after 1895. Lastly the dissertation concludes with the presentation of the similarities and the differences between the two phenomena and with the author's best attempt to objectively interpret them.

A comparative, transnational study between the early Italian and the early Japanese colonialism is without precedent. These two phenomena, influential as they may be, have yet to attract the thorough attention of the international scientific community; let alone be the focus of a comparative study. It is a qualitative, comparative, interdisciplinary research based on the interpretation and analysis of historical events, encompassing these social-economic-cultural-psychosocial parameters that influenced profoundly the evolution of the developments in question. In spite of the modern analytical methods, the concentration of relevant literature and primary sources is the most reliable approach to historiography. I am of the belief that

this thesis, an original undertaking, can offer a complete examination of the phenomenon of colonialism since it examines the issue from two so different angles. The results of the study interpreted with objectivity and scientific methodology will shed light and will contribute to the understanding of Italy's and Japan's historical development at least until the First World War.

Expansion has always been examined according to different points of view depending on the era and current scholarly trend.⁷ These efforts were largely focused on 19th and 20th century Europe, and thus have neglected the full extent of the question and have been unable to grasp the diversions and long term rural/urban implications to the conquered Asian and African peoples. Social anthropologist Max Gluckman was the first researcher to introduce anthropology and social relations in the colonial equation in his 1940 work, "Analysis of a social situation in modern Zululand". The next researchers to renounce the commonly used Eurocentric viewpoint - with the purpose of examining the full complexity of the colonialist-colonized relations - were A.L. Epstein and J. Clyde during the 1950s. Subsequently, Albert Memmi's remarkable work "The colonizer and the colonized" published in 1957, in which the author, rather boldly considering that much of the globe was still dominated by the West, presented colonialism as a European degrading disease. A few years later but in line with Memmi's and Aime Cesaire's criticism, was Fanon's, "The wretched of the World", in which the author identified nationalism, an integral part of the petit bourgeois ideology, as the source of colonial oppression and expansion. Equally critical and inclined to distance themselves from the Eurocentric doctrine and place Africa and Asia at the center of the expansion discourse were Walter Rodney, Talal Asad and of course Edward Said in the 1970s. As the springboard to this shift of historiographical perspective, from the West not to the conquered people, which would be identically erroneous, but somewhere in between one can only identify Onwaku Dike's, "Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta", published in 1956. In these terms, Ade Ajayi's famous dictum, in which he described colonialism as an "episode" of the whole African history gains validity. Over the following decade, anthropologists⁸ like Thomas Beidelmon, John and Jean Comaroff and Bruce Berman made a step forward in studying colonialism in a scientific and unbiased way, dealing with the internal dynamics and contradictions in the colonies and unfolding the dark role of religion in controlling and pacifying colonial subjects. Lastly, Crawford Young in "The African state in comparative prospective" and

⁷ In the 1970s the focus turned on the social and economic aspects whereas in the 1980s on the cultural aspects of the phenomenon. See Frederick Cooper, *Colonization in question. Theory, Knowledge, History* (London, 2005). For more details on the cultural aspect of imperialism, see John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism. A Critical Introduction*, (London-New York, 1991) and Julianne Burton, Jean Franco "Culture and Imperialism", *Latin American Perspectives*, 5/1 (1978), pp. 2-12.

⁸ For anthropologists colonialism was seen as a culture-changing process, the alteration of the conquered people's customs and social institutions. Anthropology's contribution to colonial studies has been immense but merging it with the historical method can be a challenging task. See Vittorio Lanternari, *Antropologia e imperialismo e altri saggi*, (Torino, 1974), pp. 28-29.

Mahmood Mamdani in "Citizen and Subject", published in 1994 and 1996 respectively, set the record straight by evaluating the implications on both sides.⁹

It is needless to say that all these scholars usually treated the question under certain geographical and linguistic limitations since they had different cultural and scholarly backgrounds as well as distinct interests, dictated by their personal scientific goals. Thus, it is only logical that the majority of them have dealt with English or French past overseas acquisitions, as these nations had exercised a disproportional influence, in comparison to other states' colonial rule, over the globe.

As an analytical term, imperialism is used to describe any effort of a nation to impose or maintain its dominance, control or influence over another people or nation.¹⁰ Although the term (Impérialisme), was first formulated in France during the time of Louis Philippe I (1773-1850) and later used to describe the grandiose foreign policy of Napoleon III (1808-1873), it began to be widely spread in mid 1870s Britain, to explain the expansion of the European states outside Europe.¹¹ Thereafter, imperialism was considered to be a synonym of colonialism, describing the establishment and extension of maritime powers' political sovereignty over foreign peoples and territories.¹² From the onset of the 20th century the term imperialism referred to a specific form of colonial exploitation connected to the establishment or maintenance of sovereignty over subordinate societies but it was also equated with the imposition of any form of political control or influence by one community over another.¹³ Imperialism implies an aggressive behaviour, whatever its reasoning, of one nation against another but also the impulse behind this action, being a political doctrine with multiple roots and ramifications. Since its meaning is somewhat vague and circumstantial, it came to represent both a particular episode of world history and the "expansionistic ambitions based on the asymmetry of power and social, military and economic factors" from the dawn of mankind.¹⁴ Imperialism is a set of policies, often backed up by military force, whose aim is domination of one society over

⁹ Cooper, *Colonization in Question*, pp. 35-51.

¹⁰ Thomas Guback, "Observations on the cultural imperialism, the cinema and the TV" in *The Cultural Imperialism*, ed. G. Andreadis, P. Rodakis, D. Stamoulis, M. Charalambides, trans. L. Istikopoulou, (Athens, 1987), p. 117.

¹¹ Emmanuel Roukounas, *Diplomatic history 19th century*, (Athens, 1975), p. 158.

¹² Benjamin J. Cohen, *The question of imperialism, The political economy of Dominance and Dependence*, (New York, 1973), p. 10.

¹³ Any kind of foreign rule, even the influence exercised by missionary missions and schools can be defined as imperialism. See Richard C. Thurnwald, "The Crisis of Imperialism in East Africa and Elsewhere", *Social Forces*, 15/1 (Oct. 1936), p. 85. Soukarno (1901-1970), the Indonesian nationalist leader, portrayed imperialism in 1930 as "a concept, an idea, a lust, a programme, a system, a policy of subjugating or controlling the country of another people or the economy of another nation". See Nicholas Tarling, *Imperialism in Southeast Asia 'A fleeting, passing phase'*, (London-New York, 2004), p. 8.

¹⁴ H.L. Wesseling, *Imperialism and colonialism, essays on the history of European expansion*, (London, 1997), p. 84.

another, whether by annexation or by implementing less formal means.¹⁵ To Edward Said, imperialism was the "theory, colonialism the practice of changing the uselessly unoccupied territories of the world into useful versions of the European metropolitan society" by transforming them "according to the needs and interests of the colonial rulers".¹⁶

The term imperialism indicates the dynamics of the colonial empires' formation.¹⁷ That is the deliberate activity and inclination of acquiring or promoting the political control, direct or indirect, of a state in expense of another nation. Direct control indicates a state of full sovereignty in which the conqueror controls the activities of the subordinate state, legislating, imposing taxes and drafting economic policy. This dependence relation is defined as colonialism. A less absolute form of control based on a system of influence upon the inhabitants of a subordinate territory is indirect imperialism. It includes a wide range of manifestations varying from subtle economic penetration (neo colonialism) and political influence to military pressure.¹⁸

Imperialism, as a concept and collective attitude, has been known throughout the centuries. However, in modern times three distinct phases can be identified. The first one is closely connected to strict government rule and interventionism, especially in administrative and economic sectors that rendered the colonies completely dependable by the metropolis. The ulterior purpose was achieving self sufficiency. This practice due to vast military spending and overextension, in the face of international antagonism, resulted in the financial decline of the great empires of the 16th century, nominally Spain and Portugal.¹⁹ In an attempt to avoid the financial burdens deriving from military campaigns and direct rule, 19th century Britain discarded this outdated and disadvantageous policy in favour of the famous "free trade imperialism."²⁰ Unrestricted free trade (*laissez-faire*) and economic penetration, while keeping administrative obligations to its dominions to the minimum became the corner stone of British imperialism.²¹ As long as England held its financial

¹⁵ Assimilation, introducing western customs, the alteration of the indigenous people's beliefs and mentality, process that would facilitate European domination is called cultural imperialism. See David K. Fieldhouse, *Politica ed Economia del Colonialismo 1870-1945* (Bari, 1996), p. 12.

¹⁶ A. Dirk Moses, "Empire, Colony, Genocide: Keywords and the Philosophy of History" in *Empire, Colony, Genocide. Conquest, Occupation and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, ed. A. Dirk Moses, (New York-Oxford, 2008), p. 22.

¹⁷ Empire is a mechanism of marking and policing boundaries, of designing systems of punishment and discipline with the purpose of instilling a sense of belonging to diverse populations. See Cooper, *Colonization in Question*, p. 30.

¹⁸ Fieldhouse, *Politica ed Economia*, p.4

¹⁹ Berch Berberoglou, *Globalization of capital and the nation state, Imperialism, Class Struggle and the state in the Age of Global Capitalism*, (New York, 2003), p. 14.

²⁰ Cohen, *The question of imperialism*, p. 22. Adam Smith's views influenced and played a significant role in altering Europe's obsession with accumulating metals as means of national wealth in favour of free trade policies. See Adam Smith, *An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of THE WEALTH OF NATIONS*, ed. Edwin Cannan, (Chicago, 1976), pp. 269-300.

²¹ At the time avoiding annexations and employing loans, threats, expeditions and blockades as means of promoting British interests was a quite successful strategy. For more information on the British free

predominance, thanks to its industrialization and export of goods to underdeveloped countries, which resulted into accumulating great amounts of capital, this system seemed stable. In the last quarter of the century, England's industrialization level was reached and even surpassed by Germany and the US, a development that led to fierce economic antagonisms of unprecedented scale. Nationalism, a protectionism policy led by Germany in 1879, and aggressiveness characterized the global setting eventually delivered the fatal blow to free trade. According to some historians, that was birth of the "New Imperialism" or "Neo Mercantilist Imperialism".²²

The term colonialism came to the fore after 1880 and was first used by the British newspaper *Standard* in May of 1889 in the sense of conquering territories and overseas expansion.²³ Subsequently the term was used in the title of a book published in 1905, by the French sociologist Paul Lours and came to describe the general conditions of the overseas dominions and the entire colonial system without any positive or negative connotation. Later, colonialism came to represent Europe's direct political control over populations of "different race, inhabiting territories separated by salt water from the imperial centre". This kind of interpretation is not restricted to a particular historical period but is more limited than imperialism because it outlines only one form of foreign rule. The set of activities which lead to the creation and the maintenance of colonies, i.e., of territories that traditionally were not inhabited by populations of the metropolitan authority is characterized as colonialism. The metropolis²⁴ exercises direct sovereign rights in the colonies and determines the social structure, the governance and the economic functions. Colonization, in contrast, is a technical term, initially used to explain the immigration flow of people who abandoned their homeland and became settlers (coloni) in other parts of the globe.²⁵ Colonization as a concept is related to colonialism but it signifies the settlement of peoples in overseas territories and in the case of internal colonization in frontier and

trade school of thought see Michael Havinden, David Meredith, *Colonialism and Development. Britain and its Tropical Colonies 1850-1960*, (London-New York, 1993), pp. 45-51.

²² Bernard Semmel, *The rise of free trade imperialism, Classical Political Economy the Empire of Free Trade and Imperialism 1750-1850*, (Cambridge, 1970) pp. 4-7.

²³ Roukounas, *Diplomatic history*, p. 159.

²⁴ Robert Delavignette, a renowned expert on colonial affairs, defined the concept of metropolis: "colonialism takes the form of political expansion, with the center of the expansion turning into metropolis; it becomes a matter of state, and there is a tendency to find an empire based on the principle of linking to the metropolis countries often separated from it even further ethically and sociologically than they are by physical distance...From this point of view, it becomes clear that there is no colonization without metropolis or a mother country". See Olufemi Taiwo, *How Colonialism preempted modernity in Africa*, (Bloomington, 2010), p.26.

²⁵ Wesseling, *Imperialism and colonialism*, pp. 9-10. Colonization's first manifestation in modern times can be traced during the 16th-17th centuries. Aligned with the ancient concept of colonia, that is the immigration of people from one place to another and their permanent settlement, the Spanish, Dutch and French established permanent communities and brought with them the institutions, tradition and social structures of their homelands to distant areas. Indeed, the word colonization derives from the latin verb colere, cultivate. See Taiwo, *How Colonialism preempted modernity*, p. 25.

semi occupied areas of the state, with the purpose of enhancing economic development and stability.²⁶

European colonization in the 19th century evolved nominally into three forms. Colonization by settlement which occurred notably in America and Australia. Secondly, "politico-economic" colonization, mainly in Asia and in tropical and equatorial Africa. Last, there was a mixture of these two kinds, which coupled settlement with the exploitation of the native population and their land.²⁷ A colony is a foreign territory that besides the native population is inhabited by settlers, in search of opportunity and a better life, that maintain bonds of dependency or retain the citizenship of their mother country. There are numerous types of colonies depending on their purpose and function. Commercial ones are created as trading posts, potential markets and raw materials providers for the metropolis. Military colonies are established to safeguard the empire's vital interests and its lines of communication. Civil and "welfare" colonies are predominantly adapted to European settlement and agricultural activities. Penal colonies, either preventive, correctional or penitentiary were used by colonial states as places of exile and punishment of their insubordinate citizens.²⁸ Today colonialism's scholars sort and classify colonies in two categories: settler colonialism and exploitation colonialism.²⁹ The first kind refers to the massive emigration to find, usually arable, land and the second to the exploitation of the colony for the benefit of the metropolis.³⁰ During the most acute phase of imperialism, the concept of the settler colonialism rested primarily upon two theoretical pillars: strategic security and low cost occupation of valuable areas.³¹

Whereas imperialism indicates the impulsion and the disposition to construct colonial empires, colonialism defines the political, economic and intellectual inferiority and subsequent subjection of the non-European societies to the most powerful states as a result of imperialism.³² This form of rule does not require European immigration and settlement as does colonization and the conquest and exploitation on the part of the dominant state is implied. Robert J.C. Young separated imperialism and colonialism, arguing that the former is a tendency, a mentality, the theoretical base of the phenomenon while the latter is the practical one. Paul Sweezy

²⁶ Moses, *Empire, Colony, Genocide*, p. 23.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 26.

²⁸ Carmelo Grassi, *Colonie penitenziarie*, (Milano, 1912), pp. 1-6.

²⁹ Keith Hancock, *Wealth of Colonies*, (Cambridge, 1950), pp. 18-20. Another categorization based on demographical aspects is the following: "mixed" colonies, where settlers and enslaved natives coexisted, "plantation" colonies where settlers relied and imported slave workers from Africa and "pure settlement" colonies in which white settlers eliminated the indigenous population. See Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism, A Theoretical Overview*, (Basingstoke 2010), p. 5.

³⁰ Harry Magdoff, *Colonialism: the European expansion after 1763*, trans. A. Karakatsouli, (Athens, 2007), p. 111.

³¹ Kenneth Good, "Settler Colonialism: Economic Development and Class Formation", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 14/4 (Dec. 1976), p. 601.

³² Ronald J. Horvath, "A definition of Colonialism", *Current Anthropology*, 13/1(Feb., 1972), pp. 46-47.

and Jean Suret Canale have argued that colonialism rendered the colonized countries poorer and thrust them in a more deplorable state than before their occupation. In full contrast to the imperialists who, in an effort to justify their overseas presence, were claiming that foreign rule would develop and modernize the backward parts of Africa and Asia, there were the intellectuals, socialists and others who countered that colonies were nothing more than an unnecessary burden in the state's treasury.

Depending on the type and the intensity of the imperial rule, the basic distinction between colonies and dominions-protectorates³³ or other forms of dependence can be made. In colonies, governments exercised full administrative control. Moreover, colonies were efficiently transformed into state provinces and in most cases the native national identities were deformed in the process. Informal empires, protectorates, semi-colonies, states that felt European pressure and influence but were not conquered, are quite different from actual colonies that assumed the role of satellites and became part of the global capitalist system paving the way for their future economic underdevelopment. The most typical example of indirect rule can be drawn from the British colonial experience. The British domination pattern preserved native autonomous administrative systems without interfering and exercised as less central political and economic rule as possible. Self-government, that is ruling through or in collaboration with the social upper strata, was deemed more profitable than the imposition of troublesome direct control.³⁴

Responsible for the colonial impetus and its particular intensity is a complexity of ideological, economic, political, strategic, psychological, metropolitan and peripheral motives. The European's appetite for expansion in the late 19th century is partially explained by their sense of superiority in comparison to other civilizations, and the tendency to impose, a tendency harmonized with human nature. In the course of the last 30 centuries of human presence on the planet one phenomenon is commonplace and is fuelling theories about cause and effect and historical causation, i.e., the recycling of historical events. This phenomenon is the inherent predisposition to prevail and to dominate others, the insatiable greed and the instinctive fight for survival.

The imperialistic phenomenon was at its zenith in the period 1850-1914,³⁵ because it was then when, because of the industrial revolution, the Europeans

³³ The term "protectorate" has a dual significance. Initially it declared an autonomous region, which was diplomatically and militarily protected against third parties by a more powerful country. During the 19th century partition however, the colonized countries were referred to as colonial protectorates, which of course did not enjoy any sort of autonomy.

³⁴ Fieldhouse, *Politica ed Economia*, pp. 11-19, 49-56.

³⁵ Indicatively, this period was named by the researchers "Age of Imperialism" and "Age of the New Imperialism" to demonstrate the intensity of the expansionist phenomenon. The term "new" was employed not because of the increment of capitals that were invested outside of Europe but to illustrate the rivalries, the aggressiveness, the unfounded obsessions and the outburst of nationalist agitations.

possessed all the means to proceed to the world's partition. Africa³⁶ in particular was the main pole of attraction for the European imperialists due to its proximity to Europe and the obvious incapacity of its peoples to resist and overturn the schemes against them. Africa and Asia, being at the time "unclaimed and available, were the principal targets of European penetration. Oceania was initially regarded as barren and unprofitable whereas North and South America were fortified by the Monroe doctrine.³⁷

One of the many results of the second Industrial Revolution (1870-1914) was the generation of massive profits. Those few, who accumulated them, desired to invest abroad in search of new outlets and further profits.³⁸ This surplus capital could be safely exported in the colonies under the reassuring government protection. Since self-sufficiency was not feasible, industrial states had to resort to exports and colonies, via conquest and investment, could be transformed into profitable markets for their manufactured goods.³⁹ Economic rivalries, escalated by economic depression between the 1870s and 1890s, and speared up by nationalism led to protectionist tariffs, commercial war and anxiety among the capitalists, the merchants and the politicians. It was deemed that if, industrial states (Britain, Germany, U.S., France) aspired to survive and thrive amidst the late 19th century's anarchic international arena, they had to export and supply themselves with raw materials in the cheapest possible prices. The obvious answer to this problem was colonialism. Colonies, according to the imperialist way of thinking, could change into lucrative investment fields and could also become the suppliers of essential goods. They could even absorb the West's manufactured products. Europe, in order to achieve the incorporation of every territory to the global capitalistic system, a fact that would facilitate the development of trade and the unencumbered distribution of goods, had to reorganize

³⁶ For general information regarding the historical evolution of the African nations in the modern era see Molefi Kefe Asante, *The History of Africa, the quest for eternal harmony*, (New York, 2007), Giovana Tomasello, *L'Africa tra mito e realtà, Storia della letteratura coloniale Italiana*, (Palermo, 2004), Basil Davidson, *The search for Africa, history, culture, politics*, (New York, 1994) and Arnold Guy, *Africa, a modern history*, (London, 2005).

³⁷ The Monroe doctrine was the policy proclaimed and inaugurated on 2 December 1823 by the American president James Monroe (1758-1831). It made clear that any attempt by European governments to intervene in the internal affairs of the American states or to colonize parts of the Western Hemisphere would be considered by the U.S. an act of aggression. Furthermore, the proclamation in question was assuring the Europeans that the U.S. would not interfere and would respect the colonies already established around the world. In this way the newly created Latin American States, after the liberating revolutions of the period 1808-1829, would be avoiding once and for all the European economic and political hegemony.

³⁸ Investments in railways, ships and telegraphs facilitated state administration and increased the prosperity of the mother country and the treasury of the colony. See Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress. Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850-1940*, (New York-Oxford, 1988), pp. 380-381.

³⁹ Formal political control of colonial markets assured their availability when needed, while informal control of other markets also made this quite possible. See Patrick J. McGowan, Bohdan Kordan, "Imperialism in World-System Perspective: Britain 1870-1914", *International Studies Quarterly*, 25/1 (Mar. 1981), p. 61.

the world according to its interests and impose its political and cultural institutions. Every part of the globe was to be linked as member of one world system. Greater degree of dependence and efficient autarchic control were the means to this end.⁴⁰

In the era of rapid industrialization and of European omnipotence, penetrating and conquering the African and Asian hinterland was now as feasible as never before thanks to the swift progress in the fields of weaponry, medicine, communication and transportation.⁴¹ The proponents of expansionism discerned and lent a financial tone to the colonial undertaking. In its endeavor to maintain the monopoly in science, in technology and in economic development, the metropolis was forced to depend increasingly on regional agricultural products and raw materials. Thus, backed by state protectionism, the powerful economic figures of the times were the driving force behind the race to acquire territories in other continents in order to, ultimately, exploit peoples and retain reserves and sources of industrial goods. The possibility of relatively safe and profitable investments in the occupied countries and the securing of markets for Europe's industrial products, in connection with the supply of cheap and necessary for the industry raw materials, were the incentives for both the discoveries and the annexations of seemingly insignificant territories.⁴² The limitless growth of capitalism, the willingness and the capability to invest in mines, ports and railways in the colonies and the quest for faster and more efficient profit led the manufacturers and financiers of the metropolis, who in their turn influenced their governments, to draw up a policy of expansion. Although raw materials were and could continue to be extracted from areas without the need of enforcing political control, international rivalry, fear of exclusion and greed intensified the imperialist struggle. Rubber, metals, oil were, among others, products of fundamental importance for Europe's rampant industrial expansion. Expansion turned into a stressful necessity since the danger of being excluded from a market and being superseded by a rival Great Power became the fear of industrialists and governments. The culmination of the frenetic race for securing markets and commercial posts at the end of the 19th century has taken place mostly on Africa and thus is known as "The Scramble for Africa" or "Race for Africa".

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 51.

⁴¹ The discovery of quinine, the construction of railways and steamboats, which would later enable the aggressive gunboat policy, and especially the use of advanced weapons gave the 19th century colonialists a huge advantage not only in relation to the Africans and Asians but also over their Spanish and Portuguese precursors. See Daniel R. Headrick, "The Tools of Imperialism: Technology and the Expansion of European Colonial Empires in the Nineteenth Century", *Journal of Modern History*, 51/2 (Jun. 1979), pp. 240-261.

⁴² Europe's constant need for imports, natural resources and for finding vital investment areas constituted an important economic factor of the imperialist expansion. The demand for raw materials made the colonies a necessary investment and colonialism by extension a useful policy. It is the French Prime Minister Jules François Camille Ferry, (1832-1893) who is credited with the expression "colonialism is the daughter of industrialization," which highlighted the inextricable link between the metropolitan capital and the explorations and campaigns in the depths of Africa and Asia. See David K. Fieldhouse, *The theory of capitalist imperialism*, (Hong Kong, 1967), pp. 26-52.

To John Atkinson Hobson (1858-1940), imperialism brought very feeble trade results, promoted rivalries that increased the possibility for wars and cost the nation far more than it received. Only but a few gained explicitly from the expansionist practice and had the influence and power to enforce it upon their government policies. Those beneficiaries were the shipbuilding and armament manufacturers and the soldiers, sailors and financiers whose careers were dependent on these industries.⁴³ Hobson devised an economic explanation of the imperialism based on his underconsumption theory. Europe in its industrial heyday tended to produce more than it could possibly consume. This overproduction could be diverted overseas as manufactured exports, generating capitals for the metropolis. This is why commercial outlets and exclusive markets were deemed as imperative by western capitalism.⁴⁴ In line with this theory if the population at home augmented its consumption rate to keep up with the rise of the domestic productive powers there would be no excess of products resulting in the imperialists forfeiting their claims and need to find foreign markets. He finally concluded that the logic of dominion and expansion is a fruit of the anarchic nature of the international system in which states, in an increasingly competitive spirit, thrive perpetually to "maximize their individual power position".⁴⁵ H.N. Brailsford agreed with Hobson's point of view that imperialism is basically an economic phenomenon which benefits mostly the interests of the upper classes, the plutocracy.⁴⁶

Marxist political theory suggests that all political phenomena originate from economic and material causes; thus imperialism is the inevitable product of the capitalistic form of production and the control of underdeveloped parts of the world is an expression of Europe's financial needs and greed.⁴⁷ According to Marxist historians, imperialism intensifies the unequal exchange and the exploitation of weaker states in the interests of a handful of capitalists in a few countries, whereas, domestically, the dominance of trusts, the rising cost of living and wars contribute to the economic oppression and impoverishment of the masses.⁴⁸ The capitalist dominance of the state is absolute, the bourgeoisie rule by deception, bribery, corruption and control of press. Under imperialism, capitalism expanded geographically, in search of raw materials, cheap labour, and "superprofits".⁴⁹ In a world dominated by global markets, large corporations, trusts and cartels, Lenin

⁴³ Peter J. Cain, *Hobson and Imperialism. Radicalism, New Liberalism and Finance 1887-1938*, (New York, 2002), pp. 108-114.

⁴⁴ Michael Barratt Brown, *The Economics of Imperialism*, (London, 1974), p. 24. The reason for which surplus funds are not invested in the interior of the European countries but in other continents is easily understandable. The demand and potentially the absorption of funds were far greater overseas away from the saturated markets of Europe.

⁴⁵ Tarling, *Imperialism in Southeast Asia*, pp.6-10.

⁴⁶ Victor. G. Kiernan, *Marxism and Imperialism*, (London, 1974), p. 5.

⁴⁷ E. M. Winslow, "Marxian, Liberal and Sociological Theories of Imperialism", *Journal of Political Economy*, 39/6 (Dec 1931), p. 715.

⁴⁸ David G. Smith, "Lenin's "Imperialism": A study in the Unity of Theory and Practice", *The Journal of Politics*, 17/4 (Nov. 1955), pp. 550-551.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 563.

(1870-1924) noted that the more developed the capitalism, the more intense and perceptible becomes the lack of raw materials, the more acute is the international antagonism for their acquisition and finally the more desperate is the race to establish colonies.⁵⁰ He insisted that imperialism should be regarded as the monopoly stage of the capitalist development. Alongside the "classical Marxists", Hilferding and Bukharin⁵¹ recognized as the main cause of the feverish and predatory quest for colonies the formation of monopolies and the intensification of the competition between the Great Powers.⁵² For Hilferding the main stimulus came from the developed states' will to secure monopolies taking advantage of the industrial and banking possibilities merged, as he called it, into *finance capital*. The developed-capitalist states were becoming more dependent from the periphery's raw materials and markets. According to Lenin the imperial states would annex and bring under their political control vast extensions of land in order to satisfy businessmen and entrepreneurs, who were always pressing for more action, like securing commercial opportunities and over powering foreign economic antagonism.⁵³ Hence capitalist Powers in modern times tried to construct a self-contained imperial system, struggling with each other for spheres of influence in the underdeveloped world, imposing protective tariffs, controlling pre-capitalistic backward nations and building fleets to protect their world trade. Polish philosopher Rosa Luxemburg in her work *The Accumulation of Capital*, published in 1913, argued that capitalism survives thanks to the international financial system, militarism, high protection and the colonialist policy.⁵⁴

Paradoxically, imperialism was not thoroughly negative. In reality it served a historical necessity as the only mean to liberate the backward societies from their millennial stagnation and to introduce them to industrialization and progress.⁵⁵ To Marx as immoral and cruel the imposition of imperial rule and the eradication of traditional structures may have been, the process is still a progressive step towards the formation of class consciousness, global revolution and socialism in a world scale.⁵⁶ Overlooking the fact that imperialism could actually delay and put an end to capitalist

⁵⁰ Kemp, *The marxist theory*, p. 22.

⁵¹ For the complete theory of these prominent intellectuals see Nikolai Bukharin, *Imperialism and World Economy*, (London, 1917), Rudolf Hilferding, *Finance Capital, A Study of the Latest phase of Capitalist Development*, ed. Tom Bottomore, trans. M. Watnick, S. Gordon, (London-Boston, 1981) and Vladimir. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, (Sydney, 1999).

⁵² Antony Brewer, *Marxist Theories of Imperialism, A Critical Survey*, (London-New York, 1990), p. 20.

⁵³ Fieldhouse, *Politica ed Economia*, p. 5. This view was not shared by Karl Kautsky. Defining his "ultra-imperialism" notion he concluded that major powers would most likely agree to "exploit the world jointly rather than fight over it". See Tarling, *Imperialism in Southeast Asia*, p. 7.

⁵⁴ Brewer, *Marxist Theories*, p. 56. Imperialism condemned the less developed states to poverty, stagnation and an eternal subordinate status. See A. James Gregor, Maria Hsia Chang, "Marxism, Sun Yat-sen, and the Concept of "Imperialism", *Pacific Affairs*, 55/1 (1982), p. 66.

⁵⁵ Jorge Larraín, *Theories of Development. Capitalism, Colonialism and Dependency*, (Cambridge 1989), pp. 46-47.

⁵⁶ Kolja Lindner, "Marx's Eurocentrism. Postcolonial studies and Marx scholarship", *Radical Philosophy*, (Sept. 2010), p. 5.

development, some Marxists proponents considered it as a positive development for the colonized peoples.⁵⁷

However, it would be a mistake to interpret a phenomenon of such intensity and importance, such as colonialism, with the industrial production and economic growth indexes as the single rule.⁵⁸ The ideological axles upon which the colonialist zealots practically relied, which would also place the issue on a fresh footing by treating it from a new strategic viewpoint, were the rise of nationalism, of liberalism and of the imperialism theory during the 19th century. The partition of the world was part of the European power games⁵⁹ and acted as the safety valve, i.e. the outlet for nationalistic tendencies. The activity of pressure groups, as already stated, linked inextricably the national interest with colonialism. In a time when national interest equated with power and prestige, the willingness of the European governments to build colonial empires seemed to be the only way to increase the nation's vital forces, by providing to it strategic and naval bases for the fleet, new populations for exploitation and recruitment, and raw materials for its industry.⁶⁰ Generally the student of colonialism could come to the conclusion that the combination of missionaries, of propaganda and of the technological, economic and military gap between Europe and the other continents, was the key reason behind the culmination of the imperialist phenomenon.

Protectionism, economic antagonism and the rise of militarism intensified even further the race for the possession of colonies among the old protagonists of the game. After 1850, new players made their appearance creating an asphyxiating and explosive situation. The new states (newcomers) which were formed in the second half of the 19th century, such as the German Empire (1871), the Kingdom of Italy (1861) and the Empire of Japan (1868), besides the internal nationalist pressures, the

⁵⁷ Larrain, *Theories of Development*, p. 70.

⁵⁸ In contrast to the economic justification of the phenomenon, a more recent approach downsizes the importance of trade and highlights the role of the diplomats as the key agents of colonial partition. Only at the end of the process did the businessmen engage into financial activities, obliged to balance the colonies' budget. See Patrick Wolfe, "History and Imperialism: A Century of Theory, from Marx to Postcolonialism", *The American Historical Review*, 102/2 (Apr. 1997), pp. 400-401.

⁵⁹ Politicians at the Age of Imperialism used overseas territories as bargaining counters and counterweights in a global game of diplomacy. Decisions made by state men such as Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881) and Francesco Crispi (1819-1901) in respect to their expansionist policy had a profound international impact not limited by their states' borders (state man's imperialism). In contrast to common beliefs the central state has not been the only agent of imperialistic expressions and policies. Settlers and colonial administrators acting usually for their own end proposed and convinced their government to extent their jurisdiction. Furthermore, entrepreneurs and merchants active all over the globe asked frequently their governments to intervene in their favour. Typical example of this process is Britain's conquest of some arid islands in the Pacific at the suggestion of its Australian subjects (sub-imperialism). The practice of incorporating territories, as strategic bases in order to defend other colonies is called by modern colonialism scholars "protective annexation". See Mackenzie, *The partition of Africa*, (London-New York, 1983), p. 37.

⁶⁰ Serge Bernstein-Pierre Milza, *History of Europe. The European agreement and the Europe of nations 1815-1919*, trans. Anastasios K. Dimitrakopoulos, (Paris, 1997), p. 176.

fear of exclusion from the worldwide markets and the need of the manufacturers to export their goods had to deal with another problem, one which advocated and vindicated their appetite for colonies. This was the population growth and the solution of immigrating to the colonies. In the decade of 1840, one million Germans emigrated to the South and North America.⁶¹ 108,000 people emigrated from Italy every year in the period from 1876 to 1880 and between 1881 and 1884 this number reached the figure of 154,000.⁶² The citizens of the newly established states asked for the partition of the world and believed that it is fair and just for the countries with denser populations to obtain breathing space (lebensraum) in one way or another. And if the traditional colonial powers, such as France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Britain, had already established firmly their prominent position in this colonized world, the new states would vigorously seek their share.⁶³

So began the partition and panic spread everywhere. In 1870, just one tenth of Africa was under European control. In 1900, only one tenth remained independent.⁶⁴ The British Empire in the same period covered one fifth of the world's surface having increased its size by 5 million square miles, and its population by 88 million, which represented the one fourth of the entire world population.⁶⁵ At the beginning of the 20th century, France controlled 6,000,000 square miles from 700,000 and a population of 52 million people while Germany, which had no colonial dominions until 1884, ruled now 14 million people and 1 million square miles of African land.⁶⁶ In total, more than 10 million square miles and more than 100 million Africans came under European authority in the space of approximately a decade.⁶⁷ The international situation, uncontrollable and a cause of conflicts and disputes for the Great Powers, had to be ironed out. The Berlin Conference was held in 1884-1885 for exactly this reason. Its decisions were ignored by the colonialists and as a result they failed to impose the desired discipline to the unruly colonial rivalries. On the contrary, chaos, fueled by the inexhaustible quest for wealth, spread even more rapidly: the coastal spheres of economic influence evolved into colonies, which now stretched to the depths of Africa and Asia, native states were occupied and the colonialists drew arbitrary but official borders as they deemed fit.⁶⁸

In addition, the Europeans, believing that they had the sacred mission of civilizing the world, gave new meanings to the concepts of racism and nationalism.

⁶¹ M.E. Chamberlein, *The new imperialism*, (London, 1970), p. 27.

⁶² Carlo Zaghi, *L'Africa nella coscienza Europea e l'imperialismo Italiano*, (Naples, 1973), p. 242.

⁶³ Chamberlein, *The new imperialism*, p. 27.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

⁶⁵ Cohen, *The question of imperialism*, p. 30.

⁶⁶ Chamberlein, *The new imperialism*, pp. 9-12.

⁶⁷ Mackenzie, *The partition*, p.1. Between 1800 and 1878 Europe had absorbed 17,000,000 km² and from that time until 1914 a further 22,500,000 km² (in 1800 it controlled 55% of the earth's surface, in 1878 67% and in 1914 84,4%). Just the Ottoman Empire, Siam, Ethiopia and Persia had escaped Europe's firm colonial grip but, since they were susceptible to western economic penetration and influence, could be considered as semi-colonized areas. See David K. Fieldhouse, *Storia Universale, Gli imperi coloniali dal XVIII secolo*, vol. 29, (Milano, 1976), p. 124.

⁶⁸ Mackenzie, *The partition*, p. 19.

"Popular imperialism" satisfied the public's psychological needs and since it diverted their attention from domestic malfunctions served perfectly the ruling elite's interests. Many 19th century European citizens, under the influence of romanticism and of rising nationalistic fervor, supported the colonial undertaking and felt pride at the sight of their national flag waving overseas.⁶⁹ Enthusiastic nationalist demands and the reconciliation of internal tensions were the results of a militant propaganda staged by the state in collaboration with geographic and exploration societies. These popular at the time, organizations exalted the national spirit and promoted the idea of the civilizing mission.

It was therefore, Europe's paternalistic duty to Christianize the heathens, to bring about modernization, to spread western morals to "backward" nations, to combat illiteracy, hunger and slavery.⁷⁰ These ideals disguised and covered under the illusion of a philanthropic "mission" were for many people a praiseworthy enterprise and a reasonable cause to invade the jungles of Africa and Asia.⁷¹ Besides the attraction to mystery and adventure, which were supplemented by events such as the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 or the discovery of the South African mines in 1867, there were theories that charged and pushed ruling elites, merchants, industrialists, military and ordinary men alike to take up the colonial enterprise.

The proponents of European expansion utilized and relied on axioms from important economists such as the accumulation of capital by Adam Smith (1723-1790), the reduction of profits and wages by David Ricardo (1771-1823), the growth of the world's population by Thomas Malthus (1766-1834) and of course from the social Darwinists,⁷² who were claiming that the European civilization was proven to be more adjustable and therefore superior to others.⁷³ The theories of the economists appeared attractive to the entrepreneurs who wanted to restructure their countries'

⁶⁹ E.M. Burns, *European history, the western culture: Modern Times*, trans. T. Darveris, (Thessaloniki, 2006), p. 688.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 678. The imperialism's positive side was displayed in the 1890 Brussels conference, when Europe confronted by the antislavery question in Africa seemed keen to act for the welfare of Europeans and Africans alike, by fighting the infamous slave trade, introducing western technological innovations, such as telegraphs and railways, diminishing intertribal wars, by preventing the unrestricted trade of firearms and alcohol and finally combating illiteracy and poverty. See Lewis Henry Gann, Peter Duignan, "Introduction" in *Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960, The history and politics of colonialism 1870-1914*, vol. 1, ed. Lewis Henry Gann and Peter Duignan, (Cambridge, 1969), p. 26.

⁷¹ Hans Kohn, "Some reflections on Colonialism", *The Review of Politics*, 18/3 (Jun. 1956), pp. 259-260.

⁷² According to Charles Robert Darwin (1809-1882), nature favours the prosperity of the more resilient plants and the more capable animals through evolution and natural selection. The social Darwinists considered that this principle, "the survival of the fittest" the famous expression coined by Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), could be applicable in society as well. In this manner the foundations of the struggle between ethnic and racial groups were laid and social policies were enacted that were detrimental to those citizens who were unable to sustain themselves. At the colonial front this meant that the weak, underdeveloped nations of Africa and Asia had to give way to the more powerful and vanish.

⁷³ Burns, *European history*, p. 725.

economies and to expand their businesses across the globe seeing that it would yield them huge profits.⁷⁴ E.G. Wakefield and J.S. Mill, clearly influenced by the doctrines of Adam Smith, considered colonialism as the only effective solution for absorbing the surplus capital of the fully industrialized countries. The Italian political economist A. Loria discovered yet another advantage that the brutal exploitation of non-European peoples yielded.⁷⁵ He argued that imperialism acts as a deterrent, as a stumbling block, to the eventuality of future destructive Intra-European wars.

Intellectuals like the German writer Paul Rohrbach and state men like Ferry maintained that inferior "primitive people" had no inherent right which the white man should respect. Even those that were inclined to take up "The Whites Man's Burden" or the idea of tutoring the backward peoples in a more humanitarian and reciprocally beneficially way, claimed that Western civilization had indeed the right to intervene and exploit underdeveloped and stagnant areas.⁷⁶ An ideology and a particular psychic thus emerged, in 19th century Europe, product of emotional complexes, propaganda and of pressing sociopolitical influences. Joseph Schumpeter's atavistic explanatory theory of imperialism outlines the importance of the homo sapiens' archaic predisposition towards violence as the key factor of limitless expansion.⁷⁷ Aggressive and irrational territorial expansion had its origins in preindustrial warrior-aristocratic societies and has been a modern manifestation of an ancient tendency.⁷⁸

According to the most fervent critics of colonialism, subjecting peoples to alien rule constituted a crime that disrupted African development, broke down social ties and denied the inalienable right of all people to control their destiny, a fundamental human right.⁷⁹ The liquidation of the "old tribal society" and its particular institutions was systematically encouraged and caused irreversible moral and socioeconomic consequences.⁸⁰ Foreign rule, through assimilation, "denies history" to the colonized, in the sense that it deprives their cultural rights and identity.⁸¹ Natural economies, adapted to the native population were ruined; their

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 531

⁷⁵ Fieldhouse, *The Theory*, pp. 26-60

⁷⁶ Ben N. Azikiwe, "Ethics of Colonial Imperialism", *The Journal of Negro History*, 16/3 (1931), pp. 290-291.

⁷⁷ E. M. Winslow, *Marxian, Liberal*, pp. 749-752.

⁷⁸ John H. Kautsky, "J. A. Schumpeter and Karl Kautsky: Parallel Theories of Imperialism", *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, 5/2 (May 1961), pp. 103-109. Inherent predisposition towards violence and war explains the interest of military men to take up active duty in the colonies. There, putting aside carrier opportunities, soldiers and officers, could find a new sense and purpose and could release their aggressive nature essentially unpunished. These men along with the usually uneducated administrators transfused a militaristic character to the colonies. See Chiara Giorgi, *L'Africa come Carriera, Funzioni e Funzionari del Colonialismo Italiano*, (Roma, 2012), pp. 16-17.

⁷⁹ Rupert Emerson, "Colonialism", *Journal of Contemporary History*, 4/1 (1969), pp. 4-7

⁸⁰ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Colonialism and Neocolonialism*, trans. Azzedine Haddour, Steve Brewer, Terry McWilliams, (London-New York, 2001), p.13.

⁸¹ Kavalam N. Panikkar, "Colonialism, Culture and Revivalism", *Social Scientist*, 31/1-2 (2003), pp. 6-8.

means of production and raw materials ravaged and agricultural activity was oriented to exclusively satisfy the needs of the metropolitan states.⁸²

The notions about the colonized people's inability to govern themselves and of their cultural inferiority were eagerly accepted by the imperialists, fitting and justifying, unsurprisingly, their reasoning and interests.⁸³ Racial prejudice was the ideological precursor and generator of these notions. Racism was not just a cognitive byproduct of European military and industrial supremacy in the 19th century. Fragments of it can be traced even among the texts of great scientists and enlightened philosophers such as Voltaire (1694-1778) and Kant (1724-1804) whose influential writings have formed the psychic and worldview of later generations.⁸⁴ Some Imperialists, intoxicated by their own arrogance, Christian charity and Europe's self-evident cultural superiority felt obliged to bring about progress and impose their colonial rule. A type of rule that, by definition was aiming more to exploit the world's resources rather than developing it.⁸⁵ To Aime Cesaire, the relationship between colonizer and colonized is characterized by contempt, mistrust, arrogance, intimidation, the police, forced labour, "brainless elites" and "degraded masses". Colonialism, more than the philanthropists and the missionaries, was mainly conducted by the merchants, the ship owners, the adventurers whose own moral relativism, greed and brutal instincts would gradually decivilize and dehumanize them.⁸⁶

The European expansion since its origins in the 19th century was a complicated phenomenon, a result of numerous events and quite often of irrational dispositions. Therefore, it cannot be described by a sole oversimplifying interpretation. Furthermore, every state acted, in accordance to its special needs and interests in a distinct way amidst the peripheral crises and global developments. Yet, since government policy is interchangeable and inconstant due to domestic pressures and political intentions and distinct in relation to every circumstance, the characterization of each states' expansionistic tendencies cannot be attempted without the danger of overgeneralization.

Modern historiography claims to have discovered the nature of each colonial state's individual colonialism, although they did not administer their colonies in the same way and were driven to expansion for a multiplicity of reasons. According to this scheme English expansion to the world had an economic base and aimed at

⁸² Aime Cesaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. J. Pinkham, (New York-London, 1972), p. 7.

⁸³ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, (New York, 1994), p. 112.

⁸⁴ Leon Poliakov, "Racism from the Enlightenment to the Age of Imperialism", in *Racism and Colonialism*, ed. Robert Ross, (Hague, 1982), pp. 56-59.

⁸⁵ Felix S. Cohen, "Colonialism: A Realistic Approach", *Ethics*, 55/3 (April 1945), pp. 171-172. It was impossible for the West to consolidate and expand its political predominance and economic welfare without stripping its colonies of resources and political autonomy. See Shiraz Dossa, "'Development': Colonialism, Political Theory, Ethics", *Third World Quarterly*, 28/5 (2007), pp. 889-893.

⁸⁶ Cesaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, pp. 2-5.

promoting financial interaction in a liberal fashion, refraining from direct, unprofitable rule where possible. On the other hand, the French stood for administrative centralization and cultural assimilation of their African and Asian subjects. In line with the notions of justice and fraternity, numerous French acquisitions were considered as an integrated part of the country (colonies incorporées) and their inhabitants as equal French citizens. Finally, the Germans despite their military and bureaucratic tradition imitated the British administrative model. In reality the imperialism of each power was distinctive in its origins, purposes and its relation to the advance of industrialization.⁸⁷ Moreover, intensification of the overseas expansion in the late 19th century cannot be accredited to the implementation of a concrete strategy by the imperial powers. It first appeared more like a spontaneous reaction and in contrast to earlier expansion it was the fruit of the demarcation of spheres of interest and the incremental rise of nationalistic fervour that led to successive partitions.⁸⁸

During the 1880-1890 period, the European public opinion⁸⁹ and governments were, for a wide set of reasons, more inclined to embrace conservative ideologies in domestic and foreign policy. Liberalism in Britain and France was asphyxiating under the increasing pressure of nationalistic rhetoric and the socialist parties presented a fragmented and divided front.⁹⁰ Socialists, Communists and even Anarchists all over Europe, lacking a common ideological platform, stood powerless and were unable to restrain the nationalistic tide. The Italian liberal parliamentary system under the strong influence of the Catholics and the Conservatives was transforming into an "oligarchical" institution whereas in Germany both the national-liberals and the progressive party were practically overshadowed by Bismarck's plethoric personality. In Russia, liberal opposition to the tsarist regime came as late as the 1905 revolution. Under these circumstances, conservatism soon took the form of nationalism and the omnipresent central interventism prevailed over liberal voices bidding for equal rights and democratic reforms. The spread of ideas such as "only these nations that can transform themselves into empires can have a bright future" and the conviction that the greatest national duty of every European state was to infiltrate politically underdeveloped lands, degenerated the nationalistic zeal into imperialism.

Eventually, everyone succumbed to the trend. After 1890, Britain developed the paradox of liberal imperialism based theoretically on the supremacy of the British race. In Germany, what at the time seemed an Anglo-Russian partition of the world provoked distress and nationalistic feelings even among the leftists. In France,

⁸⁷ Gann, Duignan, *The history and politics*, pp. 16-17.

⁸⁸ Fieldhouse, *Gli imperi coloniali*, 125.

⁸⁹ Public opinion was and is often unstable, misguided by slick politicians and media. At the age of Imperialism western societies' disposition towards foreign wars and conquest fluctuated, varying at times from enthusiasm to apathy and disapproval. See Victor K. Kiernan, *Eserciti e Imperi, La Dimensione militare dell'Imperialismo Europeo 1815/1960*, (Bologna, 1985), pp. 322-323.

⁹⁰ Wolfgang J. Mommsen, *Storia Universale, L'eta dell'Imperialismo, Europa 1885-1918*, vol. 28, (Milano, 1970), pp. 14-15.

regardless of the nation's supposedly liberal tradition, the whole spectrum of the 19th century society adopted the imperialistic doctrine.⁹¹ Colonial France was committed to the assimilation policy and the mission civilatrice, its supplement instrument. Imperial Germany, on the contrary, in regard to its overseas possessions, had seemingly commercial origins. However, a closer look proves that only but a few possessions turned profitable (Togo, Samoa, Kiaochow) and that the great bulk of German immigrants never flocked towards the colonies. For some scholars Germany's inability to form a nation until 1871 in conjunction with the national security preoccupation resulted in the generation of a colonial complex. Thereby, "belated" German colonialism manifested itself with extreme vigour and aggressiveness within the context of 19th and 20th century imperial expansion.⁹²

In France the origins of the new imperialism can be traced in the rising tide of nationalism and revisionism as the state had yet to recover from the humiliating defeat in the Franco-Prussian war of 1871. In Germany, although rapid industrialization could offer motivation and economic justification, expansion served also as a social policy destined to unite the Germans, fragmented politically for centuries, around foreign policy matters and eradicating internal tensions. On the contrary, King Leopold's (1835-1909) success in establishing the Congo colony was the fruit of his own interests and ambitions so that Belgium's expansion was later called "one man's imperialism".⁹³

To some historians, modern colonial empires aspired to maintain their old privileges in the world as they had been doing until then but by the 1880s, influence was not enough. International rivalries, peripheral crisis, sometimes as a threat to the established status quo sometimes as an opportunity to expand their rule, fear of commercial exclusion and geopolitical isolation weighted now disproportionally. In an era of distrust and protectionism another power's advances in even previously unknown and insignificant lands, was reason enough for animosity and panic to spread out. In this context, every annexation was not just a response to different circumstances, but a reaction to a previous annexation. Characteristically, the British were drawn to Egypt (1882) for the sake of their Indian colony's protection. When the French, in an effort to topple their rivals' advances set their sights on Sudan (1898), the British felt compelled to claim Sudan as well.⁹⁴ This example demonstrates that

⁹¹Ibid., pp. 17-25.

⁹² Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox, Susanne Zantop, "Introduction" in *The imperialist imagination, German Colonialism and its legacy*, ed. Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox, Susanne Zantop, (Michigan University, 1998), pp. 11-19.

⁹³Wesseling, *Imperialism and colonialism*, p. 76.

⁹⁴ For some scholars the intensification of the imperialistic territorial partition had initiated as a practical consequence of the Anglo-French rivalry which culminated to the Fashoda crisis in 1898. Others point out the French capture of Tunisia (1881) or the British subjection of Egypt (1882) as the spark that triggered Europe's obsession for colonial possessions in the New Age. See Wesseling, *Imperialism and colonialism*, pp. 87-88.

empires had stopped seeking valuable and advantageous areas and were frantically expanding for the sake of expansion.⁹⁵

At this point I would like to reflect on the people who have supported and helped me so much throughout this period. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Alessandro Vagnini whose knowledge and patience, helped considerably my research in Italy and Japan. I would also like to thank my professors Giovanna Motta, Antonello F. Biagini and Alessandro Saggioro for their continuous encouragement and understanding. The completion of this research would not have been feasible without their support. Appreciation also goes to professors Rosa Caroli, Bill Mihalopoulos, Ryosuke Kobayashi, Eleftheria Manta, Marco Del Bene for their kindness and assistance. Doctor Dafydd Fell of SOAS University of London provided me with valuable material and moral backing. Next I would like to acknowledge the assistance and guidance of professor Andrew Reed Hall, who acted as my tutor during my study period in Japan. He provided me with direction and valuable advices. Special thanks go to my colleagues at Sapienza University of Rome and Kyushu University for their suggestions. Lastly I would like to thank my colleague and friend Georgios Christodoulou who helped me with the writing of this thesis.

⁹⁵ Ronald Robinson, John Gallagher with Alice Denny, *Africa and the Victorians*, (Hong Kong, 1961), pp. 465-472.

Part 1 Early Italian Colonialism

2. Italy's domestic and international situation after the Unification

The kingdom of Italy was founded on 17 March 1861 under Vittorio Emanuele II (1820-1878) after many years of liberating wars (Risorgimento).¹ The fragmented in 1815 peninsula (Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, Kingdom of Two Sicilies, Duchies of Parma, Tuscany, Modena and Lucca) was unified and "piedmontised".² According to the Piedmontese state's charter, soon to be adopted by the whole nation the king was "by divine right" the supreme leader of the army, the head of the state and the head of the government. His authoritative figure ensured everyone's equality before the law, social rights, and the function of the parliament in a way that respected royal privileges before anything else. The new state's legislative power was divided between the parliament (Camera dei Deputati), elected by a small number of constituents deriving from the nation's male population (1.9 % of the population i.e. 418,000 were entitled to vote in 1865) and the senate (Senato) whose members were directly appointed by the king. New laws had to be approved by the king as well. The first Prime Minister (Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri) Camillo Cavour (1810-1861) skilfully tried to infuse a more constitutional and liberal countenance to the regime. Despite these initiatives the Italian king at the time could still dismiss his Ministers at will, dissolve the parliament, declare wars and negotiate treaties with foreign states, often superseding the Minister of Foreign Affairs.³

The new state's borders did not include however, regions considered as integral parts of Italy such as Venice and Rome which were densely populated by people of Italian descent. The participation in a new war against Austria in 1866 would follow aiming to achieve the state's territorial completion, resulting in the annexation of the Veneto province.⁴ More specifically, in August 1865 Prussian diplomats approached their Italian colleagues to propose an alliance in the event of an

¹ The term is translated as revival, palingenesis but nowadays it came to describe those politico-social agitations that led to the Italian unification. For the Italian unification see Georges Bourgin, *La "Formazione dell'Unità Italiana"*, (Florence, 1974), John Gooch, *The unification of Italy*, (London, 1984), Antonis Liakos, *The Italian Unification and the Great idea*, (Athens, 1985), Derek Beales, *The Risorgimento and the unification of Italy*, (London, 1974) and Spencer M. di Scala, *Italy from Revolution to Republic, 1700 to the present*, (Boulder Colorado, 1998).

² Piedmont's constitution, penal code and administrative system were adopted mandatorily, and therefore reluctantly by the other Italian states and ministates, whose social elite wished to uphold the traditional structures, creating friction and difficulties for the new government in Turin. See R.J.B. Bosworth, *Italy and the wider world 1860-1960*, (London-New York, 1996), pp. 87-88.

³ Denis Mack Smith, *I Savoia, fatti e misfatti della Monarchia dall'Unità al Referendum per la Repubblica*, trans. A. Serafini, (Milan, 1990), pp. 14-15. For more information on the 1848 charter see Maria Rosa Di Simone, "Lo Statuto Albertino" in *Il Parlamento Italiano 1861-1988, volume primo 1861-1865 L'Unificazione Italiana Da Cavour A La Marmora*, ed. F. Cossiga, (Milan, 1988), pp. 79-88. (79-106)

⁴ Rinaldo Petrignani, *Neutralità e Alleanza, le scelte di politica estera dell'Italia dopo l'Unità*, (Bologna, 1987), p. 15.

upcoming Austro-Prussian war. These talks culminated to a commercial treaty and in April 1866 an "offensive and defensive alliance" was concluded which, if victorious, would hand over Austrian controlled Venice to Italy. Indeed, the superior Prussian army defeated the Austrian forces in just seven weeks (14 June-23 August 1866). In October the 3rd 1866, despite the unsuccessful Italian military campaign in land and sea, the entire province of Veneto, through French mediation, came under Italian jurisdiction. Equally important for the Italian cause was the fact that by ceding Venice and negotiating a peace treaty, Austria was finally recognizing officially the Italian state.⁵

The "roman problem", the future of the capital of the papal state which enjoyed the honorary protection of the French Emperor, was the subject of talks between the Minister of Foreign Affairs Emilio Visconti Venosta (1829-1914) and the French government which led to the treaty of 1864. According to the treaty's provisions, among others, the Italian government committed to respect the territorial integrity of the Vatican state and the French assented to the gradual withdrawal of its security forces from Rome.⁶ Venosta, in this way, skilfully managed to turn the dispute into an Italian internal issue. Moving the capital from Turin to Florence in 1865 appeared as a gesture of good faith and gave the impression that Italy, for the time, would renounce the goal of occupying Rome.

The indisputable symbol of national independence Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882),⁷ always an active revolutionist, supported by his faithful volunteer corps attempted in numerous occasions to occupy Rome and to fuel anti-papacy and pro-unification insurrections. These efforts, regardless of the government's discreet support, posed a source of trouble and were a cause of embarrassment to Italian foreign policy due to its previous declaration of respecting the papal state's integrity.⁸ In the end it was another international development four years later which paved the way for the Italian state's new territorial expansion. When war between France and the Prussian dominated Northern Germany states finally came, the parliament and the king regardless of their pro French sentiments remained neutral, fearing new humiliations and defeats. Only after the brilliant German military victory in Sedan (1st of September 1870) did Italian government decide to act drastically and to grab the opportunity to conquer Rome.⁹ In 20 September 1870 the Italian army, taking advantage of the absence of the French forces since they were redeployed to the battlefield, breached the walls of the practically defenceless city. After a referendum and general elections, Vittorio Emanuele carried out his first visit into the city which

⁵Fulvio Cammarano, *Storia Politica dell'Italia Liberale 1861-1901*, (Roma-Bari, 1999), pp. 62-64

⁶ Aldo Berselli, "La Convenzione di settembre e il trasferimento della capitale da Torino a Firenze" in *Il Parlamento Italiano 1861-1988, volume secondo 1866-1869 La Costruzione Dello Stato Da La Marmora A Menabrea*, ed. F. Cossiga, (Milan, 1988), p. 145.

⁷ For a brief biography of Italy's national hero see Alessandro Vagnini, "I volontari e l'Unità d'Italia", in *Ripensare il Risorgimento*, ed. A. Battaglia, A. Vagnini, (Rome, 2011), pp. 36-38.

⁸ Raffaele Romanelli, *L'Italia Liberale (1861-1900)*, (Bologna, 1979), pp. 99-108

⁹ Cammarano, *Storia Politica*, p. 83.

six months later was to become the nation's new capital.¹⁰ The integration of the papal territories caused not only the fury of Pope Pius IX (1792-1878) but also the hostility of the Catholics within and outside Italy, forming an additional threat to the already fragile and unstable state.¹¹

The greatest problem facing the new leadership on the day after the Unification was the finances, i.e., the repayment of the enormous debt that was linked to the costs of the liberating wars and the effort to fund and operate the public administration, the fleet,¹² and the army.¹³ The public debt of the kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia was immense and approximately equal to the public debt of all the other Italian states put together, before the Unification.¹⁴ As a matter of fact, during the 1861-1870 period, the public debt rose from 2,300 million to 8,200 million. To deal with this grim situation the government decided to resort to raising tax rates and to privatizing public land, i.e. land mainly confiscated from the Catholic Church.¹⁵

The organization of the state was at a pitiful level due to the long-term conflicts and political instability. The most urgent problems were created from the union of territories that were until recently subject to different administrative, military and legal systems.¹⁶ The consolidation of state structures, the creation of a new national consciousness, and the smooth transition from the radical-reactive spirit of the Risorgimento period to disciplined orderly social life posed major challenges for the new leadership. The new ruling class, based in Turin, the capital, was sympathetic to and influenced by the liberal trends then prevalent in Europe. During the years between 1859 and 1865 the lengthy process of vigorously modernizing the legislation from the Napoleonic period and introducing modern regulations in public administration, security and education, electoral law and penal code, took place. The answer to the pressing problems rested with the country's in depth transformation by the enactment of the urgently needed¹⁷ radical innovations in the social and economic fields. These could not be limited to the dissolution of the political barriers between the various regions, that previously formed the Italian city states, or to the recognition of the new state abroad.

¹⁰ Romanelli, *L'Italia Liberale*, pp. 112

¹¹ Petrignani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, p. 30.

¹² The Piedmontese-Sardinian commercial fleet numbered 2,920 ships of all kinds and a total tonnage of 215,661 while the Bourbon had 2,988 ships amounting to a 212,965 tonnage at the moment of their coming together. Far behind followed the commercial fleet of the papal state with 39 and 6,878 respectively. See Cesare Ciano, "La marina mercantile nazionale dall'unità ad oggi" in *L'economia Italiana dal 1861 al 1961 Studi nel 1° centenario dell'unità d'Italia*, ed. A. Giuffrè, (Milan, 1961), pp. 299-300.

¹³ Federico Chabod, *Storia della politica Estera Italiana dal 1870 al 1896*, vol. 2, (Bari, 1976), p. 573.

¹⁴ Romanelli, *L'Italia Liberale*, p. 67. Accomplished in the summer of 1861, the unification of the national debt, that is the summation and thus the recognition of the individual Italian states' public debt by the government was a brave gesture of symbolic meaning. See Claudio Schwarzenberg, *La formazione del regno d'Italia, l'unità amministrativa e legislativa*, (Milan, 1975), pp. 35-36.

¹⁵ Romanelli, *L'Italia Liberale*, pp. 70-74.

¹⁶ Carlo Giglio, *L'Impresa di Massaua*, (Rome, 1955), p. 8.

¹⁷ Romanelli, *L'Italia Liberale*, pp. 14-37

Regionalism, a product of long-standing political fragmentation, and anarchy created a volatile and dangerous situation in the country's South (Mezzogiorno), which often rose up and undermined whatever authority the state exercised there. Indeed, the turmoil and the continuing unrest in Sicily during the 1860s created countless problems for the then Prime Minister, Cavour, and his successors Bettino Ricasoli (1809-1880) and Urbano Rattazzi (1808-1873). After the dissolution of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies under the Bourbon dynasty and the subsequent disorder caused by revolutionary upheaval, the South of the country was gripped by constant insurgency and fierce government responses (War of Brigandage 1861-1865). The collapse of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies as well as the destitute conditions drove many peasants into acts of rebellion. Contempt in the South for the recently founded institutions and distrust towards any new type of government provoked Turin to respond in a rather authoritative way. The ruling elites that sought to unify and urgently "piedmontize" or "Italianize" the entire peninsula could not tolerate an autonomous and defiant South. In response to the acts of anarchy that the government feared could escalate into full scale social revolution, the government established military posts and barracks in every city and deployed half of the kingdom's armed forces (100,000) in the regions of Naples and Sicily in 1862-1863 under general and later Prime Minister, Alfonso La Marmora (1804-1878). They were confronted by a guerrilla force of approximately 25,000. The Italian national army was followed by an army of magistrates and state officials in order to pacify, "Italianize" and spread the administrative unification. Clerical-conservative indoctrination and pro-Bourbon sentiments undermined the new provisional regime set up by Turin in the Neapolitan provinces. The southerners did not see the regular Piedmontese forces as liberators but as foreign conquerors, exploiters and oppressors. The latter found themselves in extreme strain due to malaria, inefficient logistic support, long lines of communications, unsuitable preparation and equipment for partisan warfare. The entire South was proclaimed in a stage of siege in which the constitutional provisions were suspended: starting from August 1863 and until December 1865 regular soldiers were given the right to shoot brigands bearing weapons on sight and to arrest suspects indiscriminately to be judged by Military tribunals.¹⁸ Military "campaigns" were organized and many cities were declared under martial law to enforce order and to combat the phenomenon of banditry.¹⁹ Only after the hostilities reached to the point of full-scale armed conflict and marked indelibly the animosity between the North and the South, did the government decide to collaborate with the local nobility and Church to impose its legislation and authority.²⁰ The spread of the ideas of socialism²¹ and

¹⁸ John Whittam, *The Politics of the Italian Army 1861-1918*, (London, 1977), pp. 78-81.

¹⁹ Christopher Duggan, *A concise History of Italy*, (Cambridge, 1994), p. 139. The civil conflict provoked 5,212 deaths and produced approximately the same number of arrested southern rebels. See Cammarano, *Storia Politica*, p. 62.

²⁰ Romanelli, *L'Italia Liberale*, pp. 29-34.

²¹ The Socialist Party (Partito Socialista) and the Democratic Party (Partito Repubblicano) were founded in 1892 and 1894 respectively. See Francesco Barbagallo, "Da Crispi a Giolitti. lo Stato, la politica, i conflitti sociali" in *Storia d'Italia, Liberalismo e Democrazia 1887-1914*, ed. G. Sabbatucci, V. Vidotto, (Bari, 1995), p. 8.

anarchism²² in connection with the distress of the anti-monarchists, the Catholics and of all those who were disappointed or harmed by the government's reform efforts (middle class, ship owners, landowners, industrialists), gave the impression that the young state would soon collapse from within.²³ The conflict can be accurately described as a civil war in terms of national disunity and casualties. The southerners saw the government's victory as a subjection to northern rule in a typical example of internal colonialism.

According to the Italian historian Are "two nations in one" coexisted in Italy: the southern medieval-type feudalism was confronted by the first timid attempts of the developing North to establish industrial enterprises.²⁴ For many conservative politicians and intellectuals only the king, seen as a symbol of unity, could merge the liberal tendencies of the North and the South's population traditional inclination to rally around a prestigious figure.²⁵ Actually the new state's 22 million of inhabitants had little in common since they had different daily life experiences, different economic practices, different values, culture, language and memories.²⁶

Under these separatist tendencies and external dangers, the government was forced to put the reformist and modernization work, which Italy needed, on the back burner. These were reforms that would have allowed the country to participate in the global economic-industrial race with the most powerful, rich and advanced states of Europe.²⁷ Instead, a large portion of the state budget was invested in military armaments and in defensive works.²⁸ Indicatively, fifteen forts were erected just in the Rome area within 1877, which cost 23 million lire.²⁹ The realization of the military might of the neighbouring states of France and Austria-Hungary and the fear that the country was unprepared and vulnerable in the event of an attack by land and sea persuaded the parliament to spend increasingly larger funds to create a combat effective army. During the war of 1866 against Austria the Italian army and navy's limited capabilities and vulnerabilities were exposed. The defeats of Custoza, the same location of another Italian failure against Austrian forces in 1848, and the sea battle of Lissa was testimony of the problematic amalgamation, the lack of a unified chain of command, the unpreparedness and the internal rivalries between the former Bourbon and Piedmont-Sardinian forces, now synthesizing the Italian army.³⁰ The

²² The Russian anarchist Mikhail Alexandrovich Bakunin (1814-1876) travelled to the Italian south and attracted several supporters in the decade of 1860. See Duggan, *Concise History*, p. 161.

²³ Ibid., p. 139.

²⁴ Giuseppe Are, *Economia e politica nell'Italia liberale (1890-1915)*, (Bologna, 1974), p. 64.

²⁵ The prominent state man Crispi indeed exclaimed: "monarchy is the symbol and the guarantee of the nation's unity". See Vincenzo G. Pacifici, *Francesco Crispi (1861-1867). Il problema del consenso allo stato liberale*, (Rome, 1984), p. 9.

²⁶ Romanelli, *L'Italia Liberale*, p.7 .

²⁷ Gino Luzzatto, *L'economia Italiana dal 1861 al 1894*, (Turin, 1974), p. 15.

²⁸ John Gooch, *Army, state and society in Italy, 1870-1915*, (London, 1989), p. 23.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 31.

³⁰ Fausto Fonzi, "La guerra del '66 e le sue ripercussioni in Parlamento" in *Il Parlamento Italiano 1861-1988, volume secondo 1866-1869 La Costruzione Dello Stato Da La Marmora A Menabrea*, ed.

reorganization, essentially from scratch, of the armed forces required amounts proportionately much larger than what other Great Powers expended.³¹

La Marmora during his tenure as the Minister of War initiated a program of reorganization of the Italian armed forces. After consultation with a specialized committee the engineers and artillery officers, a military academy was founded in Turin, a military college at Asti, an infantry school at Ivrea, and a cavalry school at Pinerolo. Moreover, his military regulations, approved by both houses on 20 March 1854, increased the length of service and revolutionized the conscription methods. The supply system was improved, payment increased and promotion through merit were encouraged. The first examples of heavy industrial plants around 1861 were depending on army contracts and produced military armaments.³² However, in the 1860s the regular forces were suffering from the lack of men, officers, supplies and horses and the transport system was still basic.³³ In the early 1860s military expenditure represented approximately 40% of the state budget, but in the late 1860s that figure decreased to almost 20%, only to skyrocket again in the late 1870s. In addition, many in the new state called for the expansion of the borders.³⁴ The leadership, in harmony with public opinion, considered the military build-up as the

F. Cossiga, (Milan, 1988), pp. 194-196. The army initially adopted the French model but soon dismissed it in favour of the more efficient German one. See Romanelli, pp. 53-54.

³¹ Chabod, *Storia della politica*, p. 574.

³² Whittam, *The Politics of the Italian Army*, pp. 46-49.

³³ In January 1860 the reorganization task was entrusted to the new Minister of War Manfredo Fanti (1806-1865). He was able to build up 50,000 men of the Central Italian region into a well disciplined force along the Piedmontese lines. On March 25 1860 these forces became formally part of the unified Italian army. During his five years the military doubled in size and Fanti reorganized his Ministry in order to promote specialization and confront the administration challenges of this increase. 13 divisions comprised the army after March 1860. A year later conscription and Piedmontese military laws were extended to Southern Italy and on May 4 1861 the Italian Army was formally established. The Army was composed by 17 divisions, 250,000 Italians from every region after the annexation of Umbria, Marches and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. On March 27 1862 the national territory was divided into six military districts and three infantry divisions were assigned to each one. See Amedeo Tosti, *Storia dell'Esercito Italiano (1861-1936)*, (Varese-Milan, 1942), pp. 58-59. The task was completed by the 1873-1876 Minister of War Cesare Francesco Ricotti Magnani (1822-1917). His 19 July 1871 regulations brought Italian conscription and organization practises closer to the Prussian example, in contrast to the French military influence prevalent for decades. Ricotti established the War School in 1867 organized peacetime manoeuvres, ordered modern equipment and promoted Italian armaments independency from foreign suppliers. Under his orders an arms factory in Turin and a powder one at Fontana Liri were erected. Fortifications and barrack buildings were also built. However, lack of coal and iron sources and financial strains impeded the industrialization of the army. Modern warfare was based on technical innovation but Ricotti, despite his efforts, could not near the coveted Prussian method. See, Whittam, *The Politics of the Italian Army*, pp. 108-111.

³⁴ The rest of Europe not only did not share but mocked the groundless proclamations, the stressful territorial claims, the clumsy and uncoordinated diplomatic pressure and the Italians' utopian objectives. It appeared that Italy had the claims of a Great Powers but the means, diplomatic and material, of a small one. See Bosworth, *Italy and the wider world*, p. 16.

first step towards the coveted territorial expansion.³⁵ The fact that Italy at the given moment was in no position to clash with any of the Great Powers seemed to have little to cool the passions. The grandeur of the Risorgimento brought euphoria, optimism and the hope to the Italian patriots that this could continue, that the heroic days of the recent past had not yet passed.³⁶ The military obligations arising from Rome's treaties with its allies, the militaristic tradition of the royal house of Savoy³⁷ and of the liberating wars, the charged atmosphere of the new imperialism period, the necessity to enforce order within the interior, the rise of the Army's prestige, the conquering aspirations for conquest in Africa and Europe led the Italian leadership to burdensome expenses, disproportionate to the financial capabilities of the lean and underdeveloped kingdom.³⁸

The country's fiscal condition was certainly far from an optimal state. The technical difficulties and shortages did not allow the Italian governments to create a stable and prosperous internal market.³⁹ The roadways, the infrastructure works and the railways that would connect Italy with foreign markets, by developing the foreign trade, were at an embryonic stage.⁴⁰ The agricultural sector was by far the country's most developed, but it was also one of the most backward in Europe, and it absorbed 60% of the labour force.⁴¹ The biggest problem was the destruction of the infrastructure during the revolutionary period and the consequent disruption of the production process. In addition, the agrarian crises⁴² of the 1855-1865 period, the increased prices, the high tariffs, the obsolete farming methods, state interventionism and the lack of modern technological equipment brought Italian agriculture on the verge of breaking down.⁴³ Only a "miracle" would place it at a competitive level.⁴⁴

³⁵ Nicholas Doumanis, *Italy, inventing the Nation*, (London-New York, 2001), p. 92. After the unification Italy's crosshairs were aimed to those provinces of Austria-Hungary which were traditionally inhabited by Italian population. The issue will be set forth further on.

³⁶ Bosworth, *Italy and the wider world*, pp. 17-19.

³⁷ Piero Del Negro, "Army, state and society in the nineteenth and early twentieth century: the Italian case", *The Journal of Italian history*, 1/2 (1978), pp. 315-318.

³⁸ The budget deficits and the grave economic stagantion conditioned the equipment and performance of the Italian army. In 1879 when Austro-Hungary deployed some troops on the Italian border, Rome terrified by the eventuality of a surprise attack in Venice, devised a defensive military plan. The shortages were so great that even adequate artillery guns were missing. See Massimo Mazzetti, *L'Esercito Italiano nella Triplice Alleanza, Aspetti della Politica Estera 1870-1914*, (Naples, 1974), pp. 18-20.

³⁹ A market that would revitalize the land's economic life and would absorb to a satisfying degree the manufactured products, industrial and agricultural. See Luzzatto, *L'economia Italiana*, p. 91.

⁴⁰ Antonio Gramsci, *Il Risorgimento E L'Unità D'Italia*, (Rome, 2010), pp.72-73.

⁴¹ Duggan, *Concise History*, p. 149.

⁴² The economic crises of 1873-1874 and 1888-1894 struck equally hard the industries, the agricultural sector and the credit institutions. The severity of the last one was additionally aggravated by the customs war with France in 1887. See Gino Luzzatto, "Gli anni piu critici dell'economia Italiana (1888-1893)" in *L'economia Italiana dal 1861 al 1961 Studi nel 1° centenario dell'unità d'Italia*, ed. A. Giuffrè, (Milan, 1961), pp. 420-432

⁴³ Romanelli, *L'Italia Liberale*, pp. 242. The trade balance remained deficient for many years after the cessation of hostilities. The following years were considered as "the darkest of the Italian economy". See Duggan, *Concise History*, p. 166. There should, however, be a particular wariness about these

The exploitation of land in Naples and Sicily, which maintained feudal medieval organization, suffered particularly from the economic malaise.⁴⁵ The dismal economic situation of the farmers, particularly in the South, naturally brought about a drop in living standards. Poverty, hunger, rise in crime, and illiteracy⁴⁶ composed the setting of the Sicilian peasants' lives.⁴⁷ The fact that the rural areas were the core of resistance against the government, and that strikes,⁴⁸ unemployment, banditry, and violence were widespread there is no coincidence. The coveted recovery would be dramatically delayed and would be based mainly on foreign capital.⁴⁹

The country's most important economic sector on the eve of its unification has to be investigated further. During the 1860s, before the incorporation of the Rome and Venice regions the arable lands accounted for 11,875,584 hectares, the grasslands for 1,271,076, the rice fields for 138,092, the pasture fields for 6,196,645, the swamps and ponds for 1,318,823 and lastly the uncultivated lands for 5,775,787.⁵⁰ One third of the entire Italian terrain is mountainous or semi-mountainous due to the Alps and the Apennines. The high population density of these regions is disproportional to their limited agricultural capabilities. In the other Italian regions where the land was arable and suitable for cultivation the ancient system of rural latifundism prevailed. However, 19th century capitalistic development required adaptation to the modern economic challenges and progressive mechanisms such as intensification of production, exportation of goods, and accumulation of profits and investments, rather than subsistence production. The typical agrarian model was the small family proprietorship administered by proprietors implementing archaic ways of production and resting indifferent to the capitalist transformation of agriculture. Despite the unsettling drop-off the government seated in Turin not only failed to undertake a vast economic reform but introduced more property and income taxes and intensified its presence (statism).⁵¹ Inconsistent and susceptible to the influences exerted by foreign

assessments. A portion of historiography does not evade grandiose expressions and exaggerations about the issue.

⁴⁴ Giorgio Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia Moderna, lo sviluppo del capitalismo e del movimento operaio 1871-1896*, vol. 7, (Milan, 1978), p. 193.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 218.

⁴⁶ In 1860 78% of the population over 6 was illiterate. See Gaetano Salvemini, *Le origini del Fascismo in Italia*, (Milan, 1966), p. 13.

⁴⁷ In the period under examination, 200 people were dying every day in Naples due to the hardships. See Ibid., p. 11. The Italian South's socio-economic situation after the unification is described in the books: Giuseppe Galasso, *Il mezzogiorno nella storia d'Italia*, (Florence, 1977) and Alfonso Scirocco, *Il mezzogiorno nell'Italia Unita (1861-1865)*, (Naples, 1979).

⁴⁸ In 1871 there were 23 strikes, 64 in 1872 and 103 in 1873. See Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia Moderna*, p. 35.

⁴⁹ Gramsci, *Il Risorgimento*, p. 73.

⁵⁰ Giacomo Acerbo, "L'agricoltura italiana dal 1861 ad oggi" in *L'economia Italiana dal 1861 al 1961 Studi nel 1° centenario dell'unità d'Italia*, ed. A. Giuffrè (Milan, 1961), p. 109

⁵¹ Some of the most prominent Italian economists like Valfredo Federico Damaso Pareto (1848-1923) and Maffeo Pantaleoni (1857-1924) characterized the state's protectionist-interventist interference in the late 1880s as "state socialism", although it was not able to generate tangible or rapid economic development. See Giuseppe Are, "Alla ricerca di una filosofia dell'industrializzazione nella cultura economica e nei programmi politici in Italia dall'Unità alla prima guerra mondiale" in

economic interests the government was not up to the task of achieving budgetary balance and socio-political stability.⁵²

For many the solution, partially, was deemed to be the introduction of customs and tariffs that would allow the Italian agricultural enterprises to expand in new markets and reconquer the internal one. The very first directions regarding the state's economic policy were laid out in May 1861, by the Prime Minister Cavour, who during his parliamentary speech supported the policy of signing commercial treaties with European states and eliminating internal and international customs, promoting the concept of free trade. In line to his proclamation Italy and France signed a commercial treaty in 1863 that boosted trade reciprocally, gave rise to Italian agricultural exports and attracted the importation of French manufactured goods and investments to the state. This seemingly favourable development was abated by the aspiring industrialists' protests who found themselves helpless against intensified competitiveness. The liberal part of the parliament detested protectionism and interventionist policy, supporting instead the reduction of the army's budget and fiscal relaxation. The Conservatives on the other hand, obsessed with the safeguarding of the tradition and influenced mostly by Catholic-social thinking, identified economic progress and industrialization as the evils that would cause the overthrow of Christian values.⁵³

During the first years of the Unification agrarian crises and economic difficulties forced the Italian leadership to turn to the solution of industrializing the country, but little capital was available for investment in this crucial field of economic development. The general weakness of the financial sector, the lack of an industrial base, of a strong internal market and the absence of state subsidies were not positive omens for the growth of the Italian industry.⁵⁴ Customs duties and charges arising from the system of protectionism,⁵⁵ made the export of Italian products at competitive prices in the international market impossible.⁵⁶ The mines were suffering from the lack of equipment and steel production had reached a stalemate. The shipbuilding companies needed funds to modernize and to participate in the international trade, in order to claim a larger share of the profits. The shipbuilding companies multiplied but soon found themselves outdated and surpassed by the new technological innovations of the modern iron ships. In 1871 Italian shipping amounted to 980,000 tons of obsolete sailing ships and just 32,000 tons of steamers whereas in 1880 the figures were 922,000 tons and 77,000 respectively.⁵⁷ In 1881 only 46.3% of the exported Italian goods and 29.7% of the foreign products imported by the Italian kingdom were

L'Imprenditorialità Italiana Dopo L'Unità. L'Inchiesta Industriale del 1870-1914, (Milan 1970), pp.46-48.

⁵² Are, *Economia*, pp. 149-193.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

⁵⁴ Duggan, *Concise History*, pp. 153-156.

⁵⁵ Martin Clark, *Modern Italy 1871-1995*, (London-New York, 1996), p. 95.

⁵⁶ Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia Moderna*, p. 226.

⁵⁷ Romanelli, *L'Italia Liberale*, pp. 240-241

transported by Italian owned ships. The ports of Bari, Brindisi and Palermo were characterized as inadequate. The state in its effort to boost the Italian commerce overseas, during the 1861-1869 period, invested almost 34 million lire to improve the infrastructure of its naval facilities. However, these funds were too broadly dispersed along the long Italian coastline to achieve a notable effect. In 1881, the "parliamentary committee for the investigation of the commercial fleet" concluded that the nation was still lacking adequate docks, disembarkation points, appropriate tracks and the necessary harbour width to compete with the other maritime powers, already active in the east through the Suez Canal.⁵⁸

The newly formed state's priorities were: establishing new industrial units, expanding the older ones, setting up schools and technical institutes, improving the means of production, agricultural and non-agricultural, balancing the budget,⁵⁹ completing public works and extending the road and railway network.⁶⁰ In 1859 the Italian railway numbered just less than 2,000 kilometres in Piedmont, Tuscany and Lombardy and not even a kilometre in the rest of the peninsula,⁶¹ while the telegraph was not yet widespread. The results and the consequences of the Industrial Revolution, which as has been seen were consolidated in Europe, would be markedly delayed in Italy. Only in the 1880s the railway network's length reached the 9,000 kilometres and a decade later numbered almost 19,000 kilometres. The venture obviously stimulated the metallurgic manufacturers that up to that point were dependent almost exclusively on the shipbuilding enterprises, and particularly the steel production industry. The delayed but nevertheless crucial project of connecting the Italian provinces and the whole of the country with the rest of the world

⁵⁸ Antonio Petino, "Il problema marittimo in Italia all'alba dell'unificazione" in *L'economia Italiana dal 1861 al 1961 Studi nel 1° centenario dell'unità d'Italia*, ed. A. Giuffrè, (Milan, 1961), pp. 288-290

⁵⁹ The fiscal deficit in 1868 reached 338 million lire, in 1870 307 and in 1872 113 million. See Chabod, *Storia della politica*, p. 565.

⁶⁰ For a more complete and objective picture of the early Italian economy, it is necessary to consider the socio-political conditions prevailing in a young state which had just come out from a long period of conflicts. The weaknesses and shortages of the Italian "industrial-agricultural" sector and the huge deviations from region to region during the decade 1860-1870 are acknowledged by the majority of the Italian economy scholars. According to different, less critical assessments, during that period and up until 1890 the Italian governments, in spite of all the obstacles, laid the foundations of industrialization, of foreign trade, of growth and infrastructure. It was also then, they explicitly note, that despite the lack of investments and public works the foundations of the later industrial boom were set. Indeed between 1881 and 1888 mining, metal, chemical and textile enterprises flourished and total industrial development ascended to 4.6% annually. The expansion of foreign trade, the mobility to urban centers and thus the increase of the available workforce, the improvement of agricultural production even without major reforms, German investments, the formation of a more dynamic, capitalistically progressive environment especially in the industrial triangle Turin-Milan-Genoa and finally state protectionism are regarded as the main root causes behind this later improvement. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the new state's internal conditions in relation to its first colonial aspirations and not to enter in a detailed assessment of the entire Italian economic history. For more, see Valerio Castronovo, "La storia Economica" in *Storia d'Italia, Dall'Unità a Oggi*, vol. 4, (Turin, 1975), pp. 5-111. For some scholars Italian agriculture and the gross domestic product in the 1861-1881 period actually developed in a satisfying way, taking into consideration the logical shortages and difficulties of the time see Gianni Toniolo, "Alcune Tendenze dello Sviluppo Economico Italiano 1861-1940" in *L'Economia Italiana 1861-1940*, ed. Gianni Toniolo, (Roma-Bari, 1978) pp. 9-14.

⁶¹ Salvemini, *Le origini del Fascismo*, pp. 11-14.

demonstrated the determination of the government to unify the country and consolidate its rule.⁶²

The inability to obtain loans and credits was justifying the lack of private initiative and interest in investing capital in the industry.⁶³ The newly founded kingdom boarding nations which were making progress in all the areas of economic activity (agriculture, shipping, heavy industry), was still demonstrating the structure and the mentality of past centuries.⁶⁴ The retarded agricultural sector, the slow growth of the industries in conjunction with the constant import of foreign products did not advance the creation of an extensive market for the domestic products.⁶⁵ The anaemic Italian economy suffered from a lack of funds and from a basically timid, opportunistic and indifferent middle class still in the making.⁶⁶ The lack of raw materials, mainly of iron, coal⁶⁷ and steel, naturally created additional difficulties. The textile industry and the sericulture were more developed than the other sectors but still they did not threaten foreign companies.⁶⁸ The chemical industry, the metallurgy, the construction companies and those associated with the extraction and exploitation of mineral reserves were still in their infancy. Only the area of the Turin-Milan-Genoa industrial triangle recorded notable economic growth in the first twenty years after the Unification.⁶⁹

This modest Italy would seek to capture distant territories and to exploit them almost immediately after its formation. The middle class who would be looking abroad for investment opportunities and enrichment was absent, and so was the powerful elite of industrialists, who might have urged the government to establish

⁶² Stefano Fenoaltea, "Le Ferrovie e lo Sviluppo Industriale Italiano 1861-1913" in *L'Economia Italiana 1861-1940*, ed. Gianni Toniolo, (Rome-Bari 1978), p. 127.

⁶³ As demonstrated by the bank scandals of the following years the Italians were quite right not to trust their country's financial institutions. In 1889 the fiasco of the construction industry sector raised some questions about the role and activities of the Italian credit institutions. The public's allegations about corruption forced the government to order an investigation to verify the transparency of the most notorious banks. The investigation of one of them, the Banca Romana in particular, revealed many irregularities and malpractices as well as an unexplainable surplus of 25 million, as the bank was printing money illegally. Other banks such as the Banco di Napoli and the Banco di Sicilia were involved in cases of bribing and political corruption. The government in its effort to avoid the outrage and the turmoil forbade the main investigator to publish these results. The cover up was not successful because Deputy Rocco de Zerbi (1843-1893) accused of accepting bribes in order to safeguard the Banco di Roma interests in the parliament, committed suicide. See Romanelli, *L'Italia Liberale*, pp. 288-289.

⁶⁴ Luzzatto, *L'economia Italiana*, p. 15.

⁶⁵ Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia Moderna*, p. 227.

⁶⁶ Giovanni Bosco Naitza, *Il Colonialismo nella storia d'Italia (1882-1949)*, (Florence, 1975), p. 8.

⁶⁷ As a result of the coal's scarcity, Italy had to secure the vital raw material for its nascent industries, mainly the metallurgy and mining sectors, from England. The imported coal's worth was approximately 30 million lire in the first decade and 50 in the second decade after the unification. See Armando Saporì, "L'industria e il problema del carbone nel primo cinquantennio di Unità nazionale" in *L'economia Italiana dal 1861 al 1961 Studi nel 1° centenario dell'unità d'Italia*, ed. A. Giuffrè, (Milan, 1961), pp. 262-263.

⁶⁸ Indicatively, in 1870 there were 500,000 textile machines in Italy, 30 million in Britain and 5.5 million in France, whereas in regard to steel production, Italian reserves reached 30,000 tones, Britain's 4 million and France's 1 million. See Duggan, *Concise History*, p. 151.

⁶⁹ Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia Moderna*, pp. 225-229.

commercial stations and naval bases in the example of the colonialist states. Domestic financial activity was characterized by weak internal dynamics with a meagre disposition for investments. Italian colonialism was never taken into consideration⁷⁰ by the prominent theorists of the colonialism phenomenon, such as Hobson and Lenin, because of the weakness of the Italian capitalism and industry, compared to that of Germany or Britain and the country's clearly lack of surplus capital. Many peasants in the South felt, because of the exploitation and the oppression, that they constituted an economic colony of the North. Some Italians said that the economically undeveloped south was their own "Africa", and therefore seeking colonies abroad was unnecessary.⁷¹ The pretext of seeking raw materials and of investing capital, with which the other Europeans justified the partition of Africa, did not apply to the Italian case as well. There were not sufficient funds to satisfy domestic demand, let alone invest in arid and unknown African regions. What the country was not lacking however was surplus population.⁷²

The demographic growth of Italy rocketed after 1870⁷³ and created additional problems. Population was growing an estimated at 400,000 people per year.⁷⁴ The agrarian crises, unemployment, and economic recession prompted many young people to emigrate. Immigrating to European and especially American territories⁷⁵ appeared as the only solution, "the safety valve" of whole generations.⁷⁶ These overseas communities broadened the capabilities and the financial benefits for the metropolitan commerce⁷⁷ providing a way for the country's social and economic issues to be defused.⁷⁸ The "Free colonization" trend of emigration led to the spontaneous creation of Italian communities abroad, out of the political reach of the government. An impressively large portion of the population, even in the relatively developed northern cities such as Milan and Turin, was now settling at Argentina, the United States and Brazil.⁷⁹ Besides this spontaneous emigration out of Italian territory, some considered applying an Anglo-Saxon model,

⁷⁰ Aldo A. Mola, "L' 'altraStoria' della colonizzazione italiana nella crisi dei sistemi imperiali tra Otto e Novecento", International Conference, (Vicoforte-Cuneo, 7 June 1997), pp. 32-33.

⁷¹ Nicola Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione coloniale italiana*, (Bologna, 2002), p. 49.

⁷² Mark I. Choate, "From territorial to ethnographic colonies and back again. The politics of Italian expansion, 1890-1912", *Modern Italy*, 8/1 (2003), p. 65.

⁷³ In the period between 1870 and 1914 the Italian population had increased by 8,5 million. See Salvemini, *Le origini del Fascismo*, p.13.

⁷⁴ Egidio Moleti di S. Andrea, *Dallo Stretto di Gibilterra al canale di Suez. L'Italia e gli altri nel Mediterraneo e nei possedimenti coloniali d'Africa*, (Lecco, 1928), p. 25.

⁷⁵ From 1878 to 1881 the Italian emigration to America was doubled, from 20,000 to 40,000 people. See Choate, "The politics of Italian expansion", p. 65.

⁷⁶ Moleti di S. Andrea, *Dallo Stretto di Gibilterra al canale di Suez*, p. 25.

⁷⁷ Choate, "The politics of Italian expansion", p. 66.

⁷⁸ Orlando Freri, *Le Colonie. Loro Genesi e loro importanza per l'Italia*, (Milan, 1935), p. 31.

⁷⁹ Ugo Ascoli, *Movimenti migratori in Italia*, (Bologna, 1979), p. 19.

according to which a partially unexplored region, like Australia, would be colonized and serve as a destination for emigrants.⁸⁰

The recurrent transatlantic passage of thousands of immigrants each year was certainly an additional incentive for the development of the Italian shipbuilding industry. Indeed, the expansion of the Italian commercial fleet was analogous to the increasing immigration flows during the 1894-1900 period. This mirrored the growth of the German maritime industry in the 1870s-1890s partially due to the existence of thriving German communities in South America.⁸¹ The lack of raw materials such as coal and iron and the ineffective state protection of the nascent Italian metallurgic industry arguably hit shipbuilding hard and placed it in a disadvantageous position in the midst of acute international competition. Whereas the lack of capitalistic organization, reliable credit institutions, funds and entrepreneurial spirit, as already stated, exacerbated the situation of the commercial shipbuilding industry, the State prioritized the strategically crucial military shipyards. The 1896 naval bill promoted, even with considerable delay, the national shipbuilding industry and offered financial incentives to the companies to use mainly domestically manufactured materials. A series of other laws (1866, 1872, 1878) exempted the importation of essential resources to the shipbuilding industry from any custom tolls. As influential as Cavour's laissez-faire views were, in the Unification's aftermath, the Italian government still had to put in place much needed tariff barriers in 1885 and 1896.⁸² Protectionism was an economic policy espoused by many states, such as France, Japan and Italy in the late 19th century in contrast with the free trade approach, which was more in line with the British economic practices.⁸³

In the 1880 decade the population exodus rose dramatically, as 1.3 million Italians left their ancestral homelands.⁸⁴ This momentous development naturally led to a debate about what to do. A part of the general public considered emigration as a citizen's right, which additionally provided enormous psychological and financial benefits to the nation, while at the same time spreading and maintaining Italian identity, the *italianità*.⁸⁵ Some held it brought about the rise of national prestige and influence, by demonstrating the Italian intelligence and industriousness to the ends of the earth. Others were less enthusiastic, but viewed it as simply a necessity. The

⁸⁰ Cesare Marongiu Buonauiti, *Politica e religioni nel colonialismo italiano (1882-1941)*, (Varese, 1982), p. 1.

⁸¹ Ludovica De Courten, *La marina mercantile italiana nella politica di espansione (1860-1914)*, *Industria, Finanza e Trasporti Maritimi*, (Rome, 1989), pp. 172-175.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 95-100.

⁸³ Japan, another new-born state, faced similar primordial challenges. The Japanese internal commerce was dominated by foreign companies up to the 1880s whereas in Italy the foreign shipping handled three times as much goods as Italian shipping. In 1896 and 1899, as soon as Japan began to free itself of the unequal treaties which set foreign duties, the government put in effect protective laws which facilitated the shipbuilding industry that operated much like the Italian paradigm. See *Ibid.*, pp. 96-97, 117-119.

⁸⁴ H. L. Wesseling, *Divide and Rule: The Partition of Africa 1880-1914*, (Westport, 1996), p. 240.

⁸⁵ Giotto Dainelli, *Problemi coloniali Italiani*, (Florence, 1919), p. 17.

downside was that the expatriate population represented an unprecedented loss of the most productive part of the Italian workforce.⁸⁶ Moreover, the Italian kingdom may have been suffering from a lack of means and of financial soundness but it had to be in a position to defend its subjects worldwide. The millions of Italians who lived and worked abroad were often the victims of racist behaviour and unjust exploitation.⁸⁷ The Catholic Church, although concerned with these abuses, perceived immigration as a useful instrument of Catholic religious propaganda diffusion to distant lands.⁸⁸ The Italian immigrant was often the recipient of maltreatment in the late 19th-early 20th century New World, just as with the Japanese and other Asians, and were often considered "the direct heir of the slave".⁸⁹ The only way to protect them was to carve out a dynamic foreign policy of applying pressure on the governments of the host countries.⁹⁰ Since 1861 the Italian Maritime Ministry held a naval station in the Rio de la Plata's estuary, which in 1865 became the base of the Naval Division of South America, and a five ship flotilla was despatched to Argentina to safeguard the interests of the nationals residing there.⁹¹

One possible alternative to emigration to the Americas was to establish colonies under governmental control, which would absorb the surplus population.⁹² The demographic-migration issue was to become a key alibi in Rome's effort to take colonies, in which Italians were promised cultivable land, opportunities, stature and social advancement. The channelling of the surplus population in other areas constituted one of the pillars of the Italian colonial policy and reinforced by extension

⁸⁶ Young men aged 15-25, would be assimilated, would not contribute to the efforts of the national industry and would not enlist in the army. See Enrico Leone, *Espansionismo e Colonie*, (Rome, 1911), p. 126.

⁸⁷ Canada admitted all immigrants except for Italians, who were characterized as unwelcome, because of their (alleged) inappropriate behaviour and their particular temperament. See Robert Michels, *L'Imperialismo Italiano*, (Milan, 1914), p. 84. Centuries of "backwardness" and subservience created the myth of the Italians' "bad character", of their moral decline and defective behaviour. See Emilio Gentile, *La Grande Italia, the myth of the nation in the 20th century*, trans. S. Dingee and J. Pudney, (Madison, 2009), p. 33.

⁸⁸ De Courten, *La marina mercantile italiana*, p. 92.

⁸⁹ Giuseppe Novero, *I prigionieri dei Savoia, La storia della Caienna italiana nel Borneo*, (Milan, 2011), p. 150. Speculations about the Italian alleged criminality and wretchedness (bad hygiene, high illiteracy) led to the immigration limitation acts of the 20th century in America. See Vittorio Falorsi, *Problemi di emigrazione: dal primo congresso degli italiani all'estero alla legge Johnson*, (Bologna, 1924), pp. 81-84.

⁹⁰ Alberto Aquarone, *Dopo Adua: politica e amministrazione coloniale*, (Rome, 1989), p. 32. A measure to apply pressure was the despatch of warships in the territorial waters of the reception countries. For this reason, building a powerful fleet was one of the Italian government's priorities.

⁹¹ Ciro Paoletti, *La Marina Italiana in Estremo Oriente, 1866-2000*, (Rome, 2000), p.7. Rome at the time sought to countervail the absence of consular authorities in South America with the frequent dispatch of warships as means of diplomacy. The dispatch of a warship in Colombia in June 1885 attests to this fact. Back home many expansion enthusiasts envisioned the creation of New Italies through the medium of emigration in South America see Stefano Pelaggi, *Il colonialismo popolare: L'emigrazione e la tentazione espansionistica italiana in America latina*, (Rome, 2015), pp. 22-34.

⁹² Irma Taddia, *L'Eritrea-colonia 1890-1952, paesaggi, strutture, uomini del colonialismo*, (Milan, 1988), p. 16.

the rhetoric linking the demographic issue with the quest for colonies. This justification of Italian colonialism as an alternative solution to the population problem had a more logical basis compared to the potential economic and raw material benefits of Africa. This argument was made despite the fact that for a newly established and economically backward state, sustaining free emigrant communities was perhaps more logical than possessing African colonies, since colonies did not provide a clear benefit and were costly because of their operational and military expenses.⁹³

1870 was the year of the catalytic developments which would alter Europe's political landscape decisively in the 19th century. While the North German Confederation was triumphing over France during the Franco-Prussian war, resulting in the unification of Germany and its rise to the position of the greatest Power of the time, Italy occupied Rome, which until then enjoyed the protection of Napoleon III. It therefore, seized the historic opportunity at a time when the second French Empire was being abolished. Rome, natural centre of the new state, constituted for the Italians a fervent desire, an idea, due to its rich ancient heritage. This city was reliving visions of greatness.⁹⁴

The new government, trying to bridge differences with the Vatican issue,⁹⁵ offered the pontiff special privileges and acknowledged his spiritual rights (Leggi di quarnigione). This overture failed, and a rupture opened between the new secular Italy and the Pope. Dissatisfied with the limitation of his authority, he could request the protection of the Catholic powers (Austria-Hungary and France) at any time against the "arbitrariness" of the Italian government. Although their concerns may have exaggerated, they were enough to push Italy to the side of the one or the other Great Powers. In this climate of uncertainty Italy was in search of security and hovered between the two poles of power, one time to the side of the French Third Republic and another to the side of the German Empire, as will be seen further on.⁹⁶ The country's delicate position was burdened by internal paralysis as well; since one government was quickly succeeding another resulting in an inability to maintain a consistent foreign policy.⁹⁷

⁹³Naitza, *Il Colonialismo*, p. 8.

⁹⁴ Three Rs evoked the glory of the past: Rinascita-Risorgimento-Roma (Renaissance-Revival-Rome). See R.J.B. Bosworth, *Italy, the least of the Great Powers: Italian foreign policy before the First World War*, (Cambridge, 1979), p. 200.

⁹⁵ Anticlericals, radicals and socialists propagating the abolition of religious orders and the distribution of the church's property, and disseminating the concepts of free thinking and rationalism incited the already agitated public opinion against the papal temporal power whereas the Catholic Church had declared an all-out war against the new liberal state. See Guido Verucci, *L'Italia Laica Prima e Dopo L'Unità 1848-1876, Anticlericalismo, Libero Pensiero e Atteismo nella Società Italiana*, (Roma-Bari, 1981), pp. 190-244.

⁹⁶ Petrigiani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, p. 37.

⁹⁷ Bosworth, *Italy, the least of the Great Powers*, p. 9.

France, an ally of the country during the war of 1859⁹⁸ against Austria, offered its full aid and support for the successful resolution of the Italian independence issue. The French investments and close cultural ties bode an auspicious coexistence and friendship. The matter of Rome, however, would complicate the relations between the two states. First of all, the French considered the occupation of the city under their protection, at a time when all their forces were deployed and fighting at the Franco-German borders, as a treasonous act. Italy's neutrality during the war of 1870 revealed the will of its political leadership to remain uninfluenced and independent, to etch out an independent foreign policy, relinquishing after many centuries the humiliating role of a second-rate Power.⁹⁹ Italy achieving Great Power status, i.e. the exercise of a policy of strength and prestige that was sought after with so much zeal, was not acceptable to France and Germany. In addition, the French Catholics were pressurising their government to undertake a crusade for the Eternal City's "return" to the Pope. The friction ceased, temporarily, after the election victory in France of the Democrats (5 March 1876) under the anticlerical Léon Gambetta (1838-1882), an event that seemed to normalize the situation.¹⁰⁰ But work accidents of Italian immigrants in France, the tariff war, the issue of Nice and Savoy's restitution¹⁰¹ and the natural rivalry for the supremacy in the Mediterranean would be the breeding grounds of constant tension.¹⁰² The fear of French aggression eventually led Italy to the German camp.¹⁰³ Paris' hostility would be manifested in various ways during the period of Africa's partition.

The problem of the Papal Seat did not affect the relations between Italy and Germany, despite the Empire's 13 million Catholics' interest in the matter, because of Bismarck's anticlerical policy (*Kulturkampf*).¹⁰⁴ The vulnerable kingdom was seeking the preservation of peace and status quo in Europe and the Mediterranean since it was not yet in a position to carve out a dynamic foreign policy.¹⁰⁵ In the face of cooling ties with France, and in need of security, it turned to Germany, which agreed to

⁹⁸ Napoleon III, an advocate of the Italian independence, took personal command of the French-Sardinian forces during the war of 1859 against Austria. As a result Piedmont annexed Lombardy with the treaty of Villafranca. For its services to the Italian cause, France was rewarded with Savoy (Savoia) and Nice (Nizza), see Serge Bernstein-Pierre Milza, *History of Europe. The European agreement and the Europe of nations 1815-1919*, trans. Anastasios K. Dimitrakopoulos, (Paris, 1992), p. 123.

⁹⁹ Chabod, *Storia della politica*, p. 26. In the 18th and 19th century none of the Italian states could take on the role of a Great Power. Most of them were vassal states of the Habsburgs and perhaps only Piedmont could be considered somewhat powerful.

¹⁰⁰ Petriagnani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, pp. 39-48.

¹⁰¹ These two regions were ceded to Napoleon III as territorial reward for the French assistance in the Second War of Italian Independence against Austria (April 29-July 11 1859).

¹⁰² The unified, with French assistance, nation not only did not become subservient to France, but evolved from the outset into a tough rival. See *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41.

¹⁰³ Giuliano Procacci, *Storia degli Italiani*, (Rome-Bari, 1993), p. 422.

¹⁰⁴ Chabod, *Storia della politica*, p. 104.

¹⁰⁵ In 1875 the Italian Foreign Minister Venosta was pointing out that preserving the peace was their primary objective. See Petriagnani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, p. 95.

provide assistance in the event of a French challenge.¹⁰⁶ Bismarck, despite the given Franco-German rivalry, urged Paris towards colonial conquests, thus playing a double game in the hope that in this way the French would "forget" the German annexation of Alsace and Lorraine.¹⁰⁷ Berlin guaranteed Italy's independence but an official alliance between them posed risks for the latter. Such an event would not only incur the hostility of France but it would also render Rome weak economically and militarily, a satellite of Berlin. The difference in strength between the two, still informal allies in 1873 would bring about the loss of Italy's diplomatic independence, closely intertwined with the coveted Great Power dream.¹⁰⁸ Germany would not allow an autonomous Italian policy and would reduce the country to a regional-medium strength Power with a mainly anti-French and anti-Russian role, in co-operation with Austria and Britain.¹⁰⁹ Signing alliances was potentially leading to the loss of the independence that was obtained with so many sacrifices, whereas neutrality would result in diplomatic isolation, as the Italians painfully discovered during the Congress of Berlin (1878) and the crisis in Tunisia (1880-1881).¹¹⁰ This dilemma plagued the right and the left wing of the Italian parliament as well as the new government in 1876 under Agostino Depretis (1813-1887). Italy needed the German protection but did not dare to fully sever its ties with France. The delicate and unusual position of Italy should be examined in this light, in the midst of emerging issues such as the balance of power in the Mediterranean¹¹¹ and Adriatic, and the partition of the Ottoman Empire's territories (Eastern Question).

An ally of Germany since 1879, Austria (Austria-Hungary after the 1867 compromise) was the rival state which prevented in every way the process of the Italian unification and independence. It was the hated century-old enemy that had oppressed and drained Italian wealth. The war between Piedmont and Austria in 1859, the occupation of Venice and Lombardy, the oppression and the arrogant intervention in the domestic issues of the Italian states had not been forgotten. Rome, sooner or later, would have to choose between war and alliance. If it truly wanted German support, it ought to overlook everything that was separating it with Austria and

¹⁰⁶ The spectacular recovery of France after the humiliation of 1870 and its revisionism was causing nervousness in Berlin. To weaken and isolate Paris, Bismarck created a grid of alliances, known as the "Bismarck System". So in 1872 and again in 1879, the formal alliance treaty of the three Emperors was signed, between Austria-Germany-Russia. In the framework of this policy Berlin agreed to support Rome in its eventual frictions with Paris. See Berstein-Milza, *History of Europe*, pp. 147-153.

¹⁰⁷ Alfredo Capone, *Destra e Sinistra da Cavour a Crispi, storia d'Italia Dall'Unità alla Prima Repubblica*, vol. 1, (Turin, 1981), p. 363.

¹⁰⁸ Petignani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, pp. 77-93.

¹⁰⁹ Barbagallo, *Da Crispi a Giolitti*, p. 23.

¹¹⁰ Disappointments that ultimately led to the conclusion of a formal alliance between Italy-Austria-Germany on 20 May 1882 in Vienna, also known as the Triple Alliance (Triplice Alleanza). See Ernesto Ragionieri, "La storia politica e sociale", in *Storia d'Italia, Dall'Unità a Oggi*, (Turin, 1976), p. 1774.

¹¹¹ Camille Fidel, *Francia e Inghilterra in Oriente e in Africa*, (Rome, 1916), pp. 6-9.

maintain good neighbourly relations.¹¹² The thawing of tensions and later the alliance with Vienna (1882) were tokens of conciliation and goodwill towards Berlin. In reality however, there was more to divide than to unite the two allies. The issue of the irredent Italian territories,¹¹³ which were still under Habsburg control, was a constant source of uneasiness between the two governments. Italian friendship was not unconditional as Rome was demanding its irredent provinces as compensation from Vienna each time that Austria-Hungary was annexing new territories in the Balkans or elsewhere.¹¹⁴ The obstinate refusal of Italian requests caused tension in the alliance. Essentially, there was never collaboration or a common course of action between the three states, which by acting without coordination were surprising even their own allies. For example, while Bismarck did not particularly think highly¹¹⁵ of his new Mediterranean ally, Crispi, the Italian Prime Minister, during his visit in Berlin in 1877, bluntly requested that Austria-Hungary abandon its claims to the irredent territories in favour of Italy. As expected the first steps toward an independent and dynamic foreign policy in connection with irredentism brought about Rome's isolation.¹¹⁶

In the same period the Italo-British relations experienced numerous fluctuations, as will be seen further on. These relations were shaped in light of the two countries' economic and geopolitical interests at each given time in the Mediterranean and Africa. In the first place, British members of the parliament and the British public opinion alike saw with benevolence and sympathy the Italian movement for self-determination and emancipation.¹¹⁷ After the Unification the Italo-British diplomatic relations, aided by the lack of conflicting interests, were established on the basis of the common anti-French orientation, and are characterized by consensus, at least in most cases. Although the co-operation between the two parties proved to be mostly indirect and theoretical, the influence exerted by the powerful British to the imperialist circles of Rome was more than obvious.¹¹⁸ The British Empire, the largest colonial power and ruler of the seas, was the reference point, the model to be followed and the indicated objective for the Italian supporters of imperialism.

¹¹² Petriagnani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, pp. 66-116.

¹¹³ The irredent Italian territories (terreirredente) in this case were principally Trento and Trieste. Other areas belonging to Italy, in accordance with the principles of self-determination and ethnicity, were Corsica, Rijeka (Fiume), Nice.

¹¹⁴ Petriagnani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, p. 122.

¹¹⁵ The German Chancellor is alleged to have confided to his close associates: "Italy has great appetite but small teeth" and "Italy is not significant. This country has no bearing because its army is poor and its policy untrustworthy." Similar views were being expressed by the Austrian diplomats as well, when outlining the "cordial" relations between the members of the Triple Alliance. See Ibid., p. 69.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 133-151.

¹¹⁷ Silvio Furlani, *L'unità d'Italia nelle discussioni dei Parlamenti esteri (1859-1861)*, vol. 1, (Rome, 1962), pp. 5-6. To trace the British policy and attitude towards the Italian liberation movement and unification, see Pietro Pastorelli, *17 Marzo 1861, L'Inghilterra e L'Unità d'Italia*, (Catanzaro, 2011), pp. 17-157.

¹¹⁸ Bosworth, *Italy and the wider world*, p. 26.

The first serious test for the independent but inexperienced Italian diplomacy occurred during the Balkan crisis of 1875-1876, in another escalation of the Eastern Question. The violence with which the High Porte squashed the revolutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and later in Bulgaria, caused Russia's involvement and declaration of war in April 1877. The Russian triumph was followed by the signing of the San Stefano treaty (3 March 1878), a settlement that essentially made Russia, overlord of the Balkan Peninsula. Britain, now exiting its "splendid isolation"¹¹⁹ under Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898), proposed the establishment of an alliance between Britain, Austria-Hungary and Italy to deal with the Russian danger, an initiative that did not come to fruition.¹²⁰ After a suggestion of Bismarck, the Congress of Berlin (June-July 1878) was convened in order to avoid a new European war. As a result of the modification of the San Stefano treaty, Britain pocketed Cyprus, due to the diplomatic support it offered to the High Porte, and Austria gained the "provisional" military control of Bosnia and of Herzegovina.¹²¹ The favourable for the Austrian interests German policy resulted in the continuation of the Russo-Austrian antagonism in the Balkans and the internal weakening of the Alliance of the Three Emperors (Germany-Austria-Hungary-Russia).¹²²

What impact had these important events on the inexperienced, newly established, Italy? The new Benedetto Cairoli (1825-1889) government participated in the negotiations with the dual objective of protecting the Italian interests in the Ottoman Empire and obtaining territorial gains from Austria. The return of Trento to Italy was after all fair and imperative after Vienna's latest expansion in the Balkans. The hot-tempered and emotional public opinion urged the Foreign Affairs Minister Luigi Corti (1823-1888) to demand from his counterpart Count Andr  ssy (1823-1890) the restitution of the irredent Italian regions. The Austrian government, clearly annoyed but bolstered due to the German support, refused once again. Instead it advised Rome to capture Tunisia or Libya, unaware that Bismarck had recently sent out the same proposal to Paris in an attempt to win over the French government. Britain trying to restore balance in the Mediterranean, after annexing Cyprus, also suggested to the French the occupation of Tunisia. The German proposal to Corti, to occupy Albania or some North African lands was on the same wavelength.¹²³ Tunisia, a region of enormous historical and geopolitical significance for the Italians, was "proposed" by the European powers to both France and Italy. Rome did not accept the suggestions and remained faithful to the principle of the Ottoman Empire's territorial

¹¹⁹ E.M. Burns, *European history, the western culture: Modern Times*, trans. T. Darveris, (Thessaloniki, 2006), p. 790.

¹²⁰ Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia Moderna*, p. 139.

¹²¹ Petrigani, *Neutralit   e Alleanza*, p. 168.

¹²² Bernstein-Milza, *History of Europe*, p. 157.

¹²³ Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia Moderna*, pp. 128-130.

integrity,¹²⁴ as it was championed and maintained after the end of the Crimean war in 1856.

Rome's first attempt at having an independent diplomacy was a complete failure. The failure to obtain Trieste and Trento from Vienna caused popular uprising. Anti-Austrian protests, terrorist attacks, criticism from the press about the timidity and incompetence of the government, slogans about the "murder of justice" and frustration for the diplomatic defeat were the results of the country's "honourable" policy at the Berlin Congress.¹²⁵ The balance of power had changed to Rome's disadvantage. The ever expanding Austria left the congress bolstered in the Balkans and Adriatic. Simultaneously, Britain strengthened its position in the Mediterranean and France was turning towards Tunisia while Rome remained apathetic, respecting the Sultan's sovereign rights. The Italian government had not protected the country's interests and left Berlin with clean but empty hands.¹²⁶ The opportunity to expand towards North Africa was lost so as not to displease the French government.¹²⁷ But not even this gesture gained the sympathy of Paris.¹²⁸ Rome, by adhering to ethics and international law at a time when other Europeans were cynically dividing among them lands that were not their own, was continuously losing ground in the frantic race for colonial expansion. The Italian government remained attached to past mentalities and did not seem able to adapt to the realities of the new imperialism. One lesson was deriving from the events: Great Powers must act quickly and decisively otherwise they will become extinct; there is no room for moral dilemmas and second thoughts. Italy attended the conference as a Great Power, but its role and activity were

¹²⁴ Egypt, Tripolitania and Cyrenaica (Libya), Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, were nominally parts of the Ottoman Empire. In the 19th century the sultan's authority and control over them existed in name only.

¹²⁵ The two conferences which took place in the German capital (1878 and 1884-1885, as has been seen) in connection with the Tunisian crisis were the catalytic events which shaped the Italian imperialist policy of the subsequent years. See Petrignani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, pp. 168-176.

¹²⁶ Luigi Salvatorelli, *Sommario della Storia d'Italia*, (Turin, 1874), p. 473. Italy was perhaps the only country which took part in the congress and left empty-handed, see Aggeliki Sfika-Theodossiou, *Italy in the First World War. Its relations with the Great Powers and Greece*, (Athens, 2004), p. 23. It is true that in the epoch Italy came to be formed, the notions of liberalism, international cooperation, free trade and refrain from territorial expansion were gaining popularity. Corti and a sizeable fraction of Italy's political classes abided by the laws of morality and teachings of the British (Manchester) liberal school. Renouncing the idea of expansion, maintaining the informal empire and promoting tariff free transactions suited the current British advantageous position and its hegemonic designs perfectly. The adoption of these policies didn't necessarily mean economic development or a higher international status for Italy. When France and Britain stepped up the world's apportionment process Italy felt the pressure to follow their lead in its quest for respect and acknowledgment. See Giuseppe Maria Finaldi, *Italian national identity in the scramble for Africa: Italy's African wars in the era of nation-building, 1870-1900*, (Bern, 2009), pp. 29-30.

¹²⁷ Petrignani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, p. 169.

¹²⁸ In 1877 Rome proposed a new trade agreement with favourable terms to which Paris ultimately did not consent. The Cairoli government failed to approach Paris economically or diplomatically, registering one more failure for its foreign policy. See Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia Moderna*, p. 137.

analogous of a secondary one.¹²⁹ Critics of the government said that having freedom of action but lacking diplomatic support turned out to be disastrous for the country. In the future, if it desired to take advantage of international circumstances, it had to exit its isolation, act more decisively, and conclude agreements and alliances.¹³⁰ They said Italy had to finally come of age and had to do so as quickly as possible.

¹²⁹ Petrignani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, p. 178.

¹³⁰ Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia Moderna*, p. 157.

3. The Italian imperial tradition, colonial theories and the first exploration missions

At the end of the 19th century the colonial rivalry of the European powers moved into a new more intense phase, which resulted in the partition of the entire African continent except for minimal exceptions.¹ Depending on the geopolitical aspirations, the psychological background, the economic objectives, each Power acted in a special and unique way in the confines of the relentless and chaotic new imperialism. Scholars have qualified British colonialism as fundamentally one of indirect rule, driven primarily by financial considerations.² But how is the early Italian colonialism defined? Through the juxtaposition of events, from the first expeditionary missions to the death rattle of the early Italian colonialism in 1896 and the participation to the international campaign of pacification in China (1899-1901), it shall be attempted to comprehend the phenomenon in depth. Before mentioning the Italians' first timid actions towards acquiring colonies, the often-underestimated psychological factor will have to be analyzed.

Most of the Great Powers were participating in the game of colonialism to control strategic sites or to satisfy financial-industrial needs. The influence of social Darwinism theories, nationalist zeal, imperialist ambitions of the military and politicians, concern for national security, belief that the balance of power will be achieved with a "fair" apportionment of African lands and that this apportionment is a legitimate right, were issues for all of the imperialist powers, they cannot be considered exclusively an Italian inspiration. What then, was unique in Italian imperialism? It is necessary to introduce another parameter, the mental burden of the Italian historical heritage in the mind of the budding imperialists. Italy was belatedly³ driven to it by a complex of insecurities and the psychological effect of Rome's ancient glory.

The principal element, which was exerting immeasurable influence on the psyche of low, middle and elite Italian classes alike, was the idea of the Roman Empire. Rome, capital of the new state, could again serve as the centre of a Mediterranean empire by resuming the mission⁴ of conquest and civilization, just as in ancient times. Many held that the new Italy, taking over the baton from Ancient

¹ The only countries that were still independent were Liberia, Morocco, Ethiopia, while Libya was under special regime. The last two were at times the objectives of the Italian imperialism, in the absence of other outlets see Eric J. Hobsbawm, *L'Età Degli Imperi*, (Bari, 2000), p. 68.

² Bruno Bagnato, *L'Europa e il mondo, origini, sviluppo e crisi dell'imperialismo coloniale*, Florence 2006, p. 13.

³ In 1849, the starting year of David Livingstone's (1813-1873) famous expeditionary mission in Africa, the Italians were staging a revolution and fighting for their independence during the First War of Independence (1848-1849). See Roberto Battaglia, *La prima Guerra d'Africa*, (Turin, 1958), p. 57.

⁴ Francesco Fasolo, *L'Abissinia e le colonie italiane sul mar Rosso*, (Caserta, 1887), pp. 236-237.

Rome, had the right and the obligation to return under its protection and control the Mediterranean and North African provinces.⁵ Italy was predestined to reincarnate the old splendor and, amidst a plethora of challenges, had to reaffirm its claims in Africa and beyond.⁶ The ancient monuments, the temples and the auditoriums demonstrated the history of Roman might across the African shore of the Mediterranean.⁷

Individual passages commenting military events that took place during the period of Italy's operations in the Red Sea can reveal characteristics of the late 19th century's popular mentality and the attraction to classical history of Italian society's pro-colonial sections. During a commemoration ceremony that took place in a Tuscan village in 1896 the following words were affixed to the church door: "In the titanic battle, the Italian cohorts reminded the barbarous Africans that the blood of Scipio flows the veins of the sons of Italy...At Amba Alage Italy experienced its own Thermopylae...and in Petro Toselli can claim a new Leonidas". In a similar occasion the mayor of a small village called Gessopalena maintained: "Dogali gave us the realization of the valour of our soldiers; Amba Alage has proven that Thermopylae has been equaled...Glory be to these names which entail martyrdom to the highest principle of all: that of the civilization of the human family". The agricultural assembly of Este in February 1887 cried out: "Honour and glory be showered on the heroes of the Thermopylae of Saati and Dogali. The whole world for ever will admire their military virtue and their magnanimous sacrifice. Not one of those men remained unscathed, all embraced the death of wounds with faith".⁸

The belief that the new kingdom could not survive without developing commercial relations with the East can also be considered, in part, a historical remnant of the glorious medieval Italy. The illustrious histories of Rome, Florence and Venice suddenly became part of the Italian national history.⁹ The memories and the nostalgia of the Italian maritime republics (*repubbliche marinare*), rich and powerful until the discovery of the New World, were attractive and strengthened the patriotic spirit of the 19th century Italians.¹⁰ Venice,¹¹ Genoa, Pisa reached the pinnacle of their power by maintaining dominions and therefore by controlling the

⁵ J.L. Miège, *L'Imperialismo coloniale Italiano dal 1870 ai giorni nostri*, (Milan, 1976), p. 10.

⁶ A.G.B., *L'Italia in Africa, Colonie e Possedimenti Italiani*, (Turin, 1935), pp. 5-9.

⁷ Giacomo De Martino, *Tripoli, Cirene e Cartagine*, (Bologna, 1907), p. 9.

⁸ Giuseppe Maria Finaldi, *Italian national identity in the scramble for Africa: Italy's African wars in the era of nation-building, 1870-1900*, (Bern, 2009), pp. 268, 277, 279.

⁹ If a divided and oppressed Italy achieved greatness in the past who knew what the modern united Italy could achieve. See *Ibid.*, p. 50.

¹⁰ V. Giglio-A. Ravenni, *Le guerre coloniali d'Italia*, (Milan, 1935), p. 24.

¹¹ The Most Serene Republic of Venice is considered the first power that introduced the idea of establishing colonies as a solution to the demographic problem. See Attilio Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani, i primi tentativi e le prime ricerche di una colonia in Italia (1861-1882)*, (Turin, 1897), p. 248. For the activity of the Italians in the East, see Amy A. Bernardy, *La via dell'Oriente*, (Florence, 1915), pp. 12-14.

trade between East and West.¹² The missionaries (missionari), traders (mercanti) and the military (militari) of the Italian states were the deputies and the exponents of a peculiar commercial imperialism that was new for the era.¹³ These states were concluding commercial agreements and, among others, were imposing their interests and their will to the peoples of the Mediterranean region already from the 12th century.¹⁴ In addition, the kingdom of Piedmont and that of the Two Sicilies had been at times interested in increasing their influence and in expanding colonially in North African lands.¹⁵ The geographical discoveries of Italian seafarers, the growth of commerce, the undisputed military and naval power of the Italian city-states during the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries represent a golden age of Italian history, influenced the Italian patriots' frame of mind. If any nation was in position to claim that it had historical rights in African lands that was no other than the Italian. In March 1865 the Italian Minister of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce Luigi Torelli (1810-1887) received a report from Biagio Caranti (1839-1891), his subordinate. Among other considerations he stated that "Italy having reached the dignity of a Nation has to exercise again that commercial preponderance of which its maritime cities were once renowned and feared. Rather than obtaining nothing now is more favorable to plant colonies in the most visited places by ships and tradesmen and the fact that this is a fundamental element for developing the commercial activity of a state is proved by England's great care to maintain (the colonies) that already process and to create new ones, even by force...".¹⁶

Another psychological burden was the relatively recent legacy of the Unification, a phenomenon from which Italian colonialism drew the concepts of a calling¹⁷ and of the nation's heroism.¹⁸ Italian patriots and adventurers turned the excitement and the enthusiasm caused by the achievement of the Unification towards support for ambitious imperialist activities.¹⁹ The Italian nation, after humiliations and centuries of subordination, was now in the agreeable position to aid, to protect and to civilize other nations that were not as capable (paternalistic racism).²⁰ Of course, the spirit of the Italian rebirth tended to advocate principles of self-determination and

¹² Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 36.

¹³ Guback, *Observations on the cultural imperialism*, p. 38.

¹⁴ The first commercial treaty of this kind was between Pisa and Tunisia in 1186. See Ottavio Banti, "I Trattati tra Pisa e Tunisi dal XII al XIV Secolo", *L'Italia ed i paesi mediterranei, vie di comunicazione, scambi commerciali e culturali al tempo delle Repubbliche Marinare*, International Conference, (Pisa, 6-7 June 1987), p. 44.

¹⁵ Bosworth, *Italy, the Least of the Great Powers: Italian foreign policy before the First World War*, (Cambridge, 1979), p.135.

¹⁶ Enrico De Leone, *L'Italia in Africa, le prime ricerche di una colonia e la esplorazione geografica politica ed economica*, vol. 2, (Rome, 1955), p. 34.

¹⁷ The idea that Italy had been liberated, as part of a grand design, to perform a God-inspired mission in the modern world was pervasive in the public opinion after the unification. See Miège, *L'Imperialismo coloniale Italiano*, p. 10.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁹ Alessandro Aruffo, *Storia del colonialismo italiano da Crispi a Mussoloni*, (Rome, 2003), p. 24.

²⁰ Antonella Randazzo, *Roma predona, il colonialismo italiano in Africa*, (Milan, 2006), p. 12.

freedom, values which are not consistent with the expansionist doctrine. The fact that its apologists craftily used the national liberation movement as an alibi for the guardianship of underdeveloped nations, constitutes perhaps the greatest contradiction of Italian colonial history.²¹ . One place where Italian nationalists claimed a devotion to the idea of national self-determination was their sympathy for Ahmed Orabi, Urabi or Arabi Pasha's (1841-1911) national-liberating movement in Egypt. Some nationalists compared him with the heroes of the Risorgimento.²² On 24 July an Italian newspaper named him "national" and "popular hero".²³ Therefore, process of moving from a rhetorical position of respect for national self-determination to cynical exploitation and coercive civilization is an interesting development. How did one square the ideals of freedom and humanity, either on individual or on collective level, with the imposing of a foreign language and authority on peoples unable to react to this alienation?

According to the historian Giuseppe Finaldi there was a deliberate attempt to equate and connect the wars of the Risorgimento period with the wars in Africa as part of a tradition-inventing process, an effort to foster the Italian identity and to promote a nation-building programme through notions of militarism and patriotism. The quest for a national purpose and the unifying possibilities of a military encounter (the Italian colonial endeavour as defined by Finaldi) are obvious. Italian policy makers only had to replace the words "liberty", "justice" and "self-determination" with the terms "progress", "civilization" and "fame". In order to bridge the gap between the younger generations and the older ones of the Risorgimento, it was necessary to present the African wars as a continuation of the wars for independence. The logical discontinuity between fighting for independence and conquering foreign lands was easily surpassed by the axiom that any territory where the Italian flag waved, automatically became part of the home land. Perhaps citing Giuseppe Badia's quotations, an old Risorgimento fighter, can shed some to light to this obscure conversion: "It is necessary that the government of Italy awakens from its slumber through its young and enthusiastic army...Showing the world that the sons (of the nation) are worthy of their Roman forefathers when they ruled the universe. It is necessary therefore that Italians set themselves other heroic sacrifices in the process of bringing civilization to the barbarous people of Africa". He also said, "The feat of the Great Captain of the People Giuseppe Garibaldi in 1860 was national and much-admired; how much more would an endeavour whose aim was the bringing of civilization and progress to barbarous peoples". Finally, "It is true that all peoples

²¹ Giglio, *L'impresa di Massaua*, p. 9.

²² The revolution, was squashed and Egypt ultimately came under British control on September 1882. See Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 155.

²³ Giampaolo Calchi Novati, *Fra Mediterraneo e Mar Rosso. Momenti di politica italiana in Africa attraverso il colonialismo*, (Rome, 1992), p. 41.

have a right to liberty and self-determination but... this disappears before civilization and progress".²⁴

The most illustrious heroes of the liberation struggle are alleged to have supported Italy's colonial destiny. Garibaldi made a special reference exactly to this calling. In addition, he urged the Italian shipping companies to operate more intensely and quickly than the foreign companies in the distant seas of the Orient.²⁵ The moral and cultural pre-eminence of the Italian nation was extolled by yet another iconic form of the Risorgimento, the philosopher and politician Vincenzo Gioberti (1801-1852). He and Cesare Balbo (1789-1853), also a politician, demanded the addition of Malta, Corsica, Nice and a part of North Africa to the newly founded kingdom. The pairing of the liberalism and nationalism ideas, in connection with the revolutionary zeal of the second half of the 19th century, created an explosive mixture in the psyche of even those more reluctant or ill-disposed towards the Italian expansionist enterprise in Africa. The prominent theorist and founder, in 1831, of the secret revolutionary organization "Giovine Italia",²⁶ Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-1872) attributed an international role to the new state and recommended the annexation of key places in Asia and Africa. It is not by chance that the ideological constructs about vocation, Italian genius and primacy²⁷ were later adopted as a whole by the theorists of fascism.²⁸ He furthermore, identified the means of expansion in "the Italian influence that has to rise in Suez and Alexandria and in a colonial invasion whenever that is and given the chance in Tunisian lands".²⁹ Finally, the architect of Italian Unification, Cavour, is alleged to have supported the economic penetration and the active presence of Italian trade and shipping across the globe.³⁰ This attitude is considered by many

²⁴ Finaldi, *Italian national identity*, pp. 252-260.

²⁵ Stefano Poscia, *Eritrea, colonia tradita*, (Rome, 1989), p. 13.

²⁶ For the historian Tokutomi Sohō the ideas and deeds of Mazzini were analogous to those of Yoshida Shōin (1830-1859), the exponent of progress who also founded a political association, named Shoka Sonjuku. See Fusatoshi Fujisawa, "Giuseppe Mazzini e l'Asia", *The Journal of Humanities and Natural Sciences*, 122 (Nov., 2009), p. 58.

²⁷ According to Gioberti, achieving unification and independence was only a part of God's design for Italy. By performing its duty, Italy had to return to the "global mission" as "teacher of nations". The glory of ancient Rome, the universality of the Catholic Church, the humanitarianism and the Renaissance were the historical evidence-answers to those who doubted about this. See Emilio Gentile, *La Grande Italia, the myth of the nation in the 20th century*, trans. S. Dingee and J. Pudney, (Madison, 2009), p. 41.

²⁸ Frequent references about colonies were present in Italian school textbooks even during the country's Liberal Era (1861-1914). Pro-colonial propaganda naturally reached its zenith in the Fascist Era (1922-1943). See Alessandro Pes, "Becoming imperialist: Italian colonies in Fascist textbooks for primary schools", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 18/5, (Nov. 2013), pp. 601-603. For more on education's impact upon the shaping of an Italian colonial conscience. See Matteo Pretelli, "Education in the Italian colonies during the interwar period", *Modern Italy*, 16/3, (Aug., 2011), pp. 275-293 and Grazia De Michele, "'A beautiful moment of bravery and hard work': Italian colonialism in post -1945 history high school textbooks", *Modern Italy*, 16/2, (May, 2011), pp. 105-120.

²⁹ De Leone, *L'Italia in Africa* p.1.

³⁰ Miège, *L'Imperialismo coloniale Italiano*, p. 11-17.

historians as the act of birth of the Italian colonialism.³¹ Of course, how much he was an enthusiast and a precursor of the Italian colonialism remains under dispute until today.

The new generation, instilled by historical glory and the theories about a sacred mission, was raised on the principles of nationalism and imperialism, claiming at the same time a place in the circle of the Great Powers, a status interwoven with colonialism.³² The aim was to make up for lost time. As a result, Italy had to enter the colonial arena, imitating the other Europeans as soon as possible. Possessing colonies seemed to be the crowning achievement, the confirmation of advancement and of the consequent prestige. When the Italian *chargés d'affaires* participated in a conference, such as that in Berlin in 1884, they were realizing that they were the outcasts of the international system.³³ It was a widely held view that their position would be improved after the occupation of African territories, even though one of the strongest Powers over time, Austria, never displayed any interest in acquiring colonies. The lack of industrialized economy and the absence of the requisite means and experience were not sufficient to discourage the Italian imperialists, who believed that colonies were created as outlets for the metropolis' demographic and economic problems since ancient times.³⁴ Besides, if impoverished Portugal could maintain a colonial empire and the humiliated France in 1870 could continue its expansion in Africa and elsewhere, then Italy too was entitled to take part in the "Scramble for Africa".³⁵ The never-ending pursuit of equality with the other Powers, the insecurity, a product of the socio-political antagonism of the late 19th century, the legacy bestowed by Ancient Rome, the powerful maritime republics and by the Risorgimento charged the Italian temperament too far and constituted an additional reason to seek lands on the opposite shore of the Mediterranean. As all this was not enough, the "colonial euphoria", the prospect of easy profits, unprecedented opportunities and imperial vocations induced explorers, such as Giuseppe "Pippo" Vigoni (1846-1914), to dream of an Italian empire which stretched from Tunis in the North to Somalia in the far Horn of Africa. For Deputy De Zerbi, war, even a single victory was enough to wake and elevate Italy's prestige to the world: "Italy is the only state of Europe that is in moral need of a

³¹ Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 58.

³² Bosworth, *Italy, the least of the Great Powers*, p. 42.

³³ The exclusion of the Italian envoys from the Berlin conference caused sensation and awkwardness to Rome. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *Documenti Diplomatici Italiani (henceforth cited as D.D.I.), Seconda Serie 1870-1896*, vol. XVII-XVIII, (Rome, 1994), pp. 422-424. However, two Italian explorers were earlier admitted to the geographical conference in Brussels, which was held in 1876 at the request of King Leopold II. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. VII, (Rome, 1983), p. 389.

³⁴ Amato Amati, *Dell'Australia e della fondazione d'una colonia con bandiera italiana*, (Milan, 1868), pp. 32-35. For the economic and commercial relations between metropolis (Italy) and colonies, see Nicola Jaeger, *Diritto di Roma nelle terre africane, l'estensione dell'ordinamento corporativo all'impero coloniale italiano e i suoi problemi*, (Padua, 1938), pp. 27-39.

³⁵ It is also referred to as "Race for Africa" or "African fever," a terminology that aptly illustrates and illuminates the events which took place during the New Imperialism's period of tension (1870-1914), a period in which the international political scene is characterized by evident rivalries and suspicion.

bloodbath".³⁶ Racist, atavistic and bellicose notions based on ethnic inferiority and the savages' alleged inadequate and despotic administration patterns, inertia and inability to govern themselves made their appearance. The historian Alfredo Oriani (1852-1909) whose theories were later adopted by fascist thinkers, called for the outright extermination of the Ethiopians: "The white race claims the land of the inferior races by calling them to its civilization: those that do not respond are condemned, those who resist will be destroyed".³⁷

These aforementioned theories, the fascination for the unknown, the rampant imagination³⁸ and the adventurous spirit, called moral and sentimental factors of imperialism by Hobson, urged the Italian explorers to penetrate geographically, to conclude treaties with underdeveloped peoples and to establish protectorates in the example of the other colonialists. The first to embark into the unknown were the explorers, the naturalists and the geographers.³⁹ The Mediterranean, the ancient Mare Nostrum with its familiar harbours, was the prime target for political influence and expansion given that sizeable communities of Italian immigrants who were already living on its shores.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the first colonial actions were manifested, for reasons which shall be examined further on, far away from the hospitable and familiar Mediterranean.⁴¹

Long before the Italian unification, consuls and representatives of the kingdom of Piedmont were already active in a geographically vast area, from the Pacific and Australia to Eastern Africa and the Indian Ocean.⁴² The first Italian mission is considered that of the Lazarist monk Giuseppe Sapeto (1811-1895) ironically to Ethiopia's Adwa in 1838 with the dual scope of proselying and exploration.⁴³ In 1852

³⁶ Romain H. Rainero, *L'anticolonialismo italiano da Assab ad Adua (1869-1896)*, (Milan, 1971), pp. 200-201.

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 218-219.

³⁸ Francesco Surdich, "La rappresentazione dell'alterità africana nei resoconti degli esploratori italiani di fine Ottocento", *L'Afrique coloniale et postcoloniale dans la culture, la littérature et la société italiennes*, International Conference, (Caen, 16-17 November 2001), pp. 41-43.

³⁹ Giotto Dainelli, "The Italian colonies", *Geographical Review*, 19/3, (Jul., 1929), pp. 404-406.

⁴⁰ Giampaolo Calchi Novati, "National identities as a by-product of Italian colonialism: a comparison of Eritrea and Somalia" in *Italian colonialism, Legacy and Memory*, ed. D. Duncan, J. Andall, (Bern, 2005), p. 47.

⁴¹ In 1872 a merchant from Genoa, stated: "Italy appears by its nature and history as destined to merge into its bosom the Mediterranean nations and those of Eastern Europe (Balkans), giving life, motion and civilization to these peoples. Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Tripoli (Libya) are at a short distance from our coasts, as if our own natural colonies." Mazzini analysing the international problems which plagued the new state wrote: "...as Morocco belongs to the Iberian Peninsula and Algeria to France, so does Tunisia, key of the central Mediterranean, linked, since the old times with the Sardinia-Sicily system and tucked away only 25 leagues from Sicily, belong, obviously, to Italy....Tunisia, Tripoli and Cyrenaica are lands most important...we were masters of these lands until the 5th century....". See Lucio Gambi, *Geografia e imperialismo in Italia*, (Bologna, 1992), pp. 7-8.

⁴² Francesco Surdich, "Il colonialismo italiano, l'imperialismo straccione," in *Il Calendario*, (Sept. 1996), p. 3.

⁴³ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 41.

the same area was explored by the missionary Guglielmo Massaia (1809-1889), "one of the most famous Italians that sought to achieve the colonial aspirations of Rome's government against Ethiopia under various scientific, commercial, diplomatic and religious guises" according to an Ethiopian historian.⁴⁴ The Italian interest in Ethiopia was said to have commenced as early as the 15th century.⁴⁵ Massaia (or Massaja) took residence and preached in the "land of the Galla" and in the province of Scioa in the southwest part of Ethiopia, eventually obtaining an influential position. His activities attracted attention and fascination, and incited many Italian exploratory missions in Ethiopia during the following years. Inaccurately enough, enthusiastic journalists and advocates of colonial expansion in the epoch of Imperialism awarded to him the titles of "the precursor of Italy's destiny in Africa", "the father of the legitimate Italian aspiration on African lands" and "the foreshadowing torch of Roman civilization in distant lands", among others.⁴⁶

The Franciscan monk Leóne d'Avancheres (1809-1879) not only set up four rest and reorganization stations for future missions and signed a commercial treaty with a local chieftain (degiasmac) on behalf of the Italian government in February 12th, 1859 but he also suggested the acquisition of a province along the Red Sea.⁴⁷ In a 1859 correspondence to Cavour he foresaw that Ethiopia "after the Suez Canal opening will present great interests to European trade and the country is very interesting both for its climate and population and for the great advantages that the foundation of an Italian colony would offer". Hereafter he added "The king Negussie would not be contrary to cede a province of his own lands to the coast of Red Sea in exchange for an assistance of 300 or 400 men or a certain number of rifles and cannons". The Piedmontese statesman in the eve of the Second War of Independence in April 1859 shifted, quite understandably, his attention to Europe and away from the secondary African affairs.⁴⁸

Similar recommendations and proposals to the Italian government were made by the Catholic monk Giovanni Giacinto Stella. In various occasions he and captain Antonio Rizzo (1827-1888), a vigorous Italian government agent, called for juridical protection via the placement of a Piedmontese consul in the province of Hamasien following the French paradigm. The northern Ethiopian province "is ideal to every kind of culture because of its climate, has plenty of water, iron mines and saltpeter and who knows how much hidden minerals in its ground...". To these pleadings and suggestions Cavour, skeptic of the colonial endeavour's profitability to Italy and

⁴⁴ Yohannes G. Selassie, "Dogali in the overall anticolonialist struggle in Africa", *The Centenary of Dogali: Proceedings of the International Symposium*, (Addis Ababa-Asmara, 24-25 January 1987), Institute of Ethiopian Studies, p. 214.

⁴⁵ Ester Panetta, *L'Italia in Africa, serie scientifico-culturale. Studi di etnologia e folklore dell'Africa orientale: Eritrea, Etiopia, Somalia*, vol. 1, (Rome, 1973), pp. 5-8.

⁴⁶ Salvatore Tedeschi, *Guglielmo Massaja e il colonialismo Italiano*, (Pinerolo, 2003), pp. 30-34, 37.

⁴⁷ Cesare Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali, cenni storici-geografici ed economici*, (Rome, 1927), p. 17.

⁴⁸ De Leone, *L'Italia in Africa*, pp. 6-7.

aware that the state was still too weak to commit itself beyond Europe, abandoned the issue. This failure did not dishearten Stella, who continued his fervent religious and political activity in the land of Bogos. In 1865, after arduous negotiations with the local chieftain, he finally obtained a territory concession with the purpose of founding a colony.⁴⁹ That was the only effort of this kind that bore some fruit and resulted to the establishment of the colony of Sciotel. On 20 February 1867 the founding of the Italo-African colony of Sciotel was ratified with a contract. This very act was the first bid by an Italian to establish an agricultural colony in Africa during the modern era. However Stella, realizing Italian government's disinterest in recognizing the colony, attempted to render it autonomous and self-governing under a new legislature on 1 April 1869, that gave to the colony an agricultural and commercial orientation.⁵⁰ The colony was abandoned a few months later because of the hardships, French rivalry and the lack of funding and support from Rome. The majority of settlers (thirty in total) as well as the founder of the colony succumbed due to the illnesses and the difficult conditions.⁵¹ Shortly after, the Egyptian authorities took over the locality, thus terminating the first Italian attempt to establish a colony in Africa.

Andrea De Bono (1821-1871) was active in the wider region of Ethiopia in 1853, followed by Angelo Castelbolognesi (1836-1874) and Don Giovanni Beltrame (1824-1906) in 1856.⁵² Giovanni Miani (1810-1871) and Piaggia (Carlo Piaggia 1827-1882) explored methodically Nile's source in today's Sudan, whereas the former Garibaldian Romolo Gessi (1831-1881) zealously headed into Sudan's interior.⁵³ The clergymen and the explorers, in the name of faith, might and science bolstered the Italian presence and influence in distant Eastern Africa. The list of explorers who acted on the basis of spreading Italy's name in the world and acquiring land and commercial footholds is endless. Orazio Antinori (1811-1882), Sebastiano Martini Bernardi and Giovanni Chiarini (1849-1879) created a centre of vital importance for further infiltration in Ethiopia's interior, at Let Marefia. Pellegrino Matteuci (1850-1881) and Gustavo Bianchi (1845-1884) were interested in the Horn of Africa, whereas Manfredo Camperio (1826-1899) visited Libya in the mid-19th century.⁵⁴ Many travellers, such as Giuseppe Maria Giulietti (1847-1881) and Gian Pietro Porro (1844-1886), met tragic ends while in the performance of their missions. These grim events moved the until then indifferent Italian public opinion. Nationalistic bravado by scholars, such as Leone Carpi (1810-1898) and Amato Amati (1831-1901), about planting the Italian flag in places distant and largely unknown urged many patriots to risk everything by seeking political benefits across the globe, in the example of the

⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 11-15.

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 16-18.

⁵¹ Angelo Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa Orientale Dall'Unità alla Marcia su Roma*, (Rome-Bari, 1976), pp. 19-21.

⁵² Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali*, p. 19.

⁵³ Miège, *L'Imperialismo coloniale Italiano*, p. 20.

⁵⁴ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, pp. 41-42.

European imperialists.⁵⁵ On 6 March, 1866 Amati, while addressing to the Genovese Chamber of Commerce argued in favour of a colony, preferably in New Guinea, that would grant assistance to Italian wanderers and would finally pull Italy out of its passivity. The philosopher Baldassare Poli (1795-1883) pushed further on maintaining that "Italy is summoned, or better destined to be once more a first rank nation in the seas. Because of its geographical position and its favorable and natural tendencies and, no less for its spirit of awakening and its commercial interests, it can only aspire the establishment of mercantile colonies in the most remote regions: this fact will bestow honour to its flag and enhance the New Kingdom's glory and prosperity".⁵⁶ Several Italian explorers, such as Ippolito Rosellini (1800-1843), Giovanni Battista Belzoni (1778- 1823), Giuseppe Acerbi (1773-1846) and Bernardino Drovetti (1776-1852) headed at the beginning of the 19th century in Egypt; however, in the period 1856-1890 there was a decisive shift of interest towards Sudan and Ethiopia.⁵⁷ In this geographical area scientists, military men tired from the stress of everyday life within camp and ordinary adventurers, attempted to materialize the Italian vision of a colonial empire. In 1876, Chiarini and Antonio Cecchi (1849-1896) approached Ancober in the Ethiopian interior, aiming to conclude friendship treaties with the local chieftains.⁵⁸

Their example was imitated two years later by Vigoni, Bianchi⁵⁹ and Matteuchi in neighbouring Dancalia. The often tragic end of the explorers and travellers did not hold back Italy's exploration programme in Eastern Africa. Instead, it was skilfully used to legitimise Rome's expansionary plans in the Red Sea. The newly established kingdom, as the frequency of the missions reveals, had chosen (or had been forced to choose as will be seen further on) Eastern Africa to build its colonial empire.⁶⁰ It had now also acquired undeniable rights in the region, since it had paid the required death toll and had sufficiently explored it. Secondly, Italy in the last quarter of the 19th century was interested in the coast of Somalia, a fact that the exploratory missions of Giuseppe Candeo (1859-1899), Ugo Ferrandi (1852-1928), Vittorio Bottego (1860-1897), Cecchi, who in May 1885 concluded a commercial treaty there, Eugenio Ruspoli (1866-1893) and Luigi Robecchi-Bricchetti (1855-1926) attest to.⁶¹ The pioneer Léone d'Avancheres was said to have embarked on a missionary mission in the Somalian town of Brava for two years around 1855.

⁵⁵ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 304.

⁵⁶ De Leone, *L'Italia in Africa*, p. 39.

⁵⁷ Angelo Del Boca, *L'Africa nella coscienza degli Italiani, miti, memorie, errori, sconfitte*, (Milan, 2002), p. 11.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁵⁹ Bianchi was killed in 1884 at Macalle by natives, while searching for routes from the interior to the Red Sea's coastline. The same fate befell upon Porro while he was exploring Harrar in 1886. The two events were exploited by Rome to intervene militarily in Eritrea and Ethiopia seeking revenge and the exemplary punishment of the perpetrators. See *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁶⁰ Giampaolo Calchi Novati, "Italy and Africa: How to forget colonialism", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 13/1, (May, 2008), p. 43.

⁶¹ Del Boca, *L'Africa nella coscienza degli Italiani*, pp. 19-20.

Nevertheless the first exploratory recognition of the coast was concluded by the admiral and member of the royal family, Tommaso di Savoia (1854-1931), on board of the light warship "Vettor Pisani" in 1879.⁶² Very few Italian explorers headed for Tanganyika and the Zambezi River.⁶³ Gradually, as will be seen, the scientific nature of the missions would be altered to assert dominance and to set up spheres of influence.⁶⁴

Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia may have been preferred by the Italian decision makers but they did not monopolise their interest. The search for an island in the seas of the Pacific and Indian Ocean and its swift capture was imperative.⁶⁵ After the opening of the Suez Canal (1869) shipping companies, mainly from Genoa, wanted to connect Italy with the ports of India, China and Australia. For this purpose commercial stations, resupply depots and safe ports along the long sea route to the Far East were necessary.⁶⁶ Suddenly, the two shores across the Red Sea gained strategic and economic interest. Regions, such as Yemen and, on the opposite shore, Beilul, Amara and Sceik Said made up the objectives of the colonialist powers, since their occupation would facilitate shipping and trading between Europe and India.⁶⁷ Sapeto persistently stressed the importance of the region for the budding Italian interests; however, when he visited again the location in question in 1869 he discovered that the most important locations of the shoreline had been already occupied by Britain and France.⁶⁸

The new government had also renewed all the trade treaties that the Italian miniature states had signed with Asian countries before the Union.⁶⁹ Italy's meager economic interests in the Far East but also in South America, where populous communities of Italian immigrants were established, had to be protected primarily for reasons of prestige.⁷⁰ The coveted prestige and the safety of transportations would be ensured only by building a large merchant and naval fleet and by controlling ports and bases throughout the world, following the British example. Indeed, in the period under examination, very few regions of the world were not taken under consideration by the Italian explorers. The frenzy, a frequent phenomenon of the New Imperialism age, reached to such a point that the Italian government, amid serious internal

⁶² On the other hand, the first economic endeavour seems to be ventured by a certain Giovanni Succi who after establishing a commercial company based in Comoros islands strived to expand his trading activities in Somalia, without much success. See De Leone, *L'Italia in Africa*, 221-224.

⁶³ Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali*, p. 35.

⁶⁴ According to the Ethiopian historian Kofi Darkwah "the official Italian attitude of absolute disinterestedness in colonial matters underwent a transformation" and gradually became more assertive and expansionistic towards the end of 1870's decade. See Tedeschi, *Guglielmo Massaja*, p. 36.

⁶⁵ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 304.

⁶⁶ Surdich, "Il colonialismo italiano, l'imperialismo straccione", p. 5.

⁶⁷ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 531.

⁶⁸ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 45.

⁶⁹ The trade treaties with Japan and China were renewed in 1866, while that with Thailand in 1868. See Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 524.

⁷⁰ Surdich, "Il colonialismo italiano, l'imperialismo straccione", p. 5.

difficulties, was devising and working out occupation plans of the Philippines, Borneo, Patagonia, the Russian Aleutian islands off Alaska, the Falkland islands in the south Atlantic, Congo, Libya, south Morocco, the Swedish West Indies⁷¹ and others locations on a frequent basis. Under consideration was also Lagos in Guinea,⁷² the southern part of Greenland⁷³ and the Brazilian coastline.⁷⁴ Rome was considering any available territories in which there appeared to be a power vacuum wishing to "avoid missing the dealing of all the cards in the colonial game, before it managed to sit down at the table of history."⁷⁵ Albania and other areas of the Balkans also came under the microscope after 1875. In addition to locations with seemingly economic potential or of strategic importance, Rome's decision makers also sought places appropriate for the establishment of penal (*Colonie penali-stabilimenti penitenziari*) or displacement colonies,⁷⁶ after the British example.⁷⁷

In 1862, on the occasion of the wedding of Luis of Portugal (1838-1889) to the Italian princess Maria Pia (1847-1911), the issue of conceding some African territories, Mozambique and Angola, to Italy was discussed for the first time.⁷⁸ The Italian government initiated the negotiations, carrying the hope of gaining an area sufficient enough for the establishment of a penitentiary institution. This potential domain's legal regime had to be determined entirely by Rome since Italian law forbade the confinement of Italian citizens by foreign authorities.⁷⁹ The Portuguese

⁷¹ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 32.

⁷² In February 1852, Giambattista Scala (1817-1876), a merchant navy officer disembarked in Lagos driven by curiosity and a strange sense of humanitarianism. There he supposedly dedicated himself in instructing and organizing the local agricultural production process, decisively improving the living conditions of the "primitives". In order to place this territory under Italian jurisdiction and further explore the surrounding area he addressed a letter to Cavour requesting protection and the material and financial means to carry out his grandiose goals. On 11 November 1855 was named honorary consul of Piedmont to Lagos but the Italian government didn't entrust him anything more than that. In 1862 Lagos was annexed to the British Empire and any trace of Italian influence and Scala's beneficiary work vanished completely. See De Leone, *L'Italia in Africa*, pp. 19-27.

⁷³ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, pp. 523-526.

⁷⁴ Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 67.

⁷⁵ Isabella Rosoni, *La colonia Eritrea, la prima amministrazione coloniale italiana (1880-1912)*, (Macerata, 2006), p. 37.

⁷⁶ After 1865, the year the death penalty was abolished in Italy, the problem of the inmates' rising number in the prisons of the peninsula, due to the exacerbation of the banditry phenomenon, was aggravated; their number was increasing by 1,500 individuals per year. So, the idea of creating penal colonies was put on the table, an issue which provoked backlash due to the financial and moral dimensions that it took. See Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 524. This was not a new concept. The question was also put to the government of the kingdom of Piedmont in 1852. See Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 67.

⁷⁷ The British were the first to implement the idea of creating penal colonies in Australia in the first half of the 19th century, see Alessandro Lioy, *Colonia penitenziaria ad Assab: conferenza alla Società Africana d'Italia*, (Naples, 1884), p. 10.

⁷⁸ Massimo Gaibi, *Manuale di Storia Politico-Militare delle colonie italiane*, (Rome, 1928), p. 6.

⁷⁹ According to the 1819 convention between Portugal and the Kingdom of Two Sicilies the later could hand in any number of undesirable detainees and the former assumed the responsibility of transporting

were not willing to give up control of territory, and the talks came to nothing. The discussions were repeated in 1869, on the initiative of the Prime Minister Luigi Federico Menabrea (1809-1896), however, without a substantial result, as the Portuguese government was hesitant to renounce even the slightest sovereignty right in Mozambique and Angola.

After a relevant study about determining suitable conditions for the establishment of penal colonies, Caranti proposed in 1865 the occupation of the Nicobar Islands⁸⁰ in the Indian Ocean. The initiative did not come to fruition and the island's ownership came under British control, as did the other Italian targets in the Indian Ocean, the Andaman Islands. An advisory committee⁸¹ under the former Garibaldian Gerolamo Nino Bixio (1821-1873), another fervent exponent of colonialism, was also sent in 1867 to the island of Sumatra of the Dutch East Indies. The plan, which in time fell through, provided for the concession of a part of the island from the Netherlands to Italy. Almost simultaneously, Celso Cesare Moreno (1831-1901) a vigorous adventurer that came to be a member of the American House of Representatives in the 1890's, disgusted by the ill-treatment of his compatriots in the US, employed his political skills and influence to establish an Italian colony in Sumatra. The project of a military expedition to impose the Italian protection on the island reportedly met King Vittorio Emanuele's and Prime Minister Ricasoli's approval. However, the inept diplomatic handling of the supposedly delicate issue by Foreign Minister Venosta raised international suspicions and alarmed the local Dutch authorities. As a result, the Dutch government, the traditional arbiter of Indonesian waters, rushed to exert its full political authority on Sumatra by a military campaign in 1873-1874.⁸² In 1868 Commander Vittorio Arminjon (1830-1897) proposed the establishment of an Italian colony on the Natuna Islands, in the China Sea, while other explorers suggested the Maldives Islands.

A year later a naval mission sailed to southern Morocco to examine the possibility of using a coastal site as a displacement colony under the blessings of Menabrea and the Italian consul in Tangiers, Scovasso. The latter asserted that the

and placing them on its colonies under Portuguese legal jurisdiction. See De Leone, *L'Italia in Africa*, pp. 28-29.

⁸⁰ The Nicobar Islands, at the time a property of the Danish state, were estimated to be in a position to "host" 20,000-30,000 prisoners while they could also be used for growing tobacco plantations. For Caranti the possession of the islands would attribute to Italy "a certain prestige and it would make her flag more famous in Indian seas". However, the construction of a correctional facility so far away from the metropolis was estimated that it would cost 100 million lire and 20 years of continuous work. The plan to capture them was never implemented because of the removal of Minister Torelli from his position. The island complex was ultimately occupied in 1869 by the British. See Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, pp. 69-70.

⁸¹ It was the precursor of the "Committee for the colonies" established by the Italian government on April 30 1871 to study and find suitable areas in Africa and the Pacific to serve as Rome's penal or commercial bases. See Daniele Natili, *Un programma coloniale: La Società Geografica Italiana e le origini dell'espansione in Etiopia (1867-1884)*, (Rome, 2008), pp. 49-50.

⁸² De Leone, *L'Italia in Africa*, pp. 71-75.

Sultan's government "was used to treating our products and Italians unfairly" and for this reason "it was about time to display our war banner" in Morocco. The reconnaissance mission sailed along the coast and studied the natural conditions of Nun, Sous (Souss) and Tagiakant regions without any noteworthy results. These locations were deemed inappropriate and the mission refrained from further action.⁸³ An exploratory mission in Cambinda, Angola had the same outcome and thus yet another opportunity was lost. In 1871 the Italian committee on colonies, a short-lived body comprised of experts such as, the former Minister and diplomat Cristoforo Negri (1809-1896),⁸⁴ the politician Giacobbe Isacco Malvano (1841-1922) and the geologist Felice Giordano (1825-1892), addressed the British parliament to determine its position in case that the island Socotora or Socotra off Somalia, which was also in the designs of the Ottoman Empire, was occupied. The island's strategic position forced Britain to officially annex it, thus ensuring its smooth communication with India.

Giovanni Emilio Cerruti, an experienced explorer subsidized by the Italian state with 100,000 lire to cover his expenses and bargain with the local chiefs, explored various islands of Indonesia and Polynesia and reached as far as Australia and New Guinea. On 11 August 1869, he and various members of the Menabrea government "convinced of the necessity to establish a colony", concluded a contract which assigned Cerruti with the task of finding a locality able to accommodate a population of 20,000, almost half of whom would be inmates, in the Polynesian archipelago and more precisely in the vicinity of New Guinea. The brigantage and gueriglia in the regions controlled by the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies until 1861, filled Italian prisons with thousands of detenees. More than that, the region had to feature a safe anchorage, favourable climate, fertile soil and abundance of water. Cerruti had to act within four months of his departure from Singapore and respect the Dutch and British sovereign rights in the area. Despite the government's highly pretentious demands he discovered locations, in the Celebes and Moluccas seas, suitable to accommodate the required population, with relatively mild climate and drinking water, whereas in January 1870 in the Aru island complex he concluded a treaty granting a limited area to Italy by the local beneficiary. In 1869-1870 acting as he reckoned outside of the Dutch zone of interests⁸⁵ he stipulated concession treaties

⁸³ Ibid., pp. 66-71.

⁸⁴ Negri rejected the idea of territorial acquisitions on distant and unprofitable lands. He promoted Italy's economic expansion in the Far East and the consolidation of its influence in the more secure Mediterranean basin instead. These objectives would be feasible by the stipulation of numerous commercial treaties, the appointment of official consuls along the most vibrant trade routes and the naval presence of Italy in every corner of the globe. See Cristoforo Negri, *La grandezza italiana. Studi, confronti e desideri*, (Torino, 1864), pp. 4-11. Negri exclaimed: "If in the remaining world Italy wanted to be inglorious and obscure she could not be so in the Mediterranean, where we are bathe in virtue from the ancient times. In Levant there is not even a stone without the name of bravery and Italian wisdom. Our fathers were navigating in the rising sun and at various times the Aegean islands were ours scattered like steps in the sea's idleness." See Ibid., pp. 251.

⁸⁵ Cerruti noted "it is with firm conviction that today I can assure that the Dutch don't posses any title or sovereignty rights upon the Banten islands. I have been assured by the very governors of Makassar

in various local islands, fulfilled the terms of his contract and enabled the establishment of a colony on behalf of the Italian Government. According to the contract and the common practice of the time, after the stipulation of the relative treaties, an Italian warship had to gain possession of the localities both militarily and officially. The act that would render the occupation effective and valid never occurred as a result of a misunderstanding and lack of coordination between Cerruti and the commander Carlo Alberto Racchia (1833-1896).⁸⁶ As a result, Italy did not acquire its first colony this time either. The Menabrea government fell in 1869 and the following of Giovanni Lanza (1810-1882), found the agreements unprofitable and inappropriate amid the preparations for the capture of Rome. The reasons of the failure are obviously more complex. According to the historian Novero these can be summarized in Dutch opposition, British obstructiveness, the government's political, social, economic deficiencies, its misguided actions and finally the Italian middle classes' lack of interests, means and entrepreneurial spirit.⁸⁷ Cerruti didn't lose hope. In February 1882 he proposed to Prime Minister Depretis the constitution of a commercial and exploratory company in Polynesia in line with the European pattern. Fearing that such a step would anger the Dutch and British authorities the government did not grant its consent to this proposal.⁸⁸ Just two years later a more confident and potent European state would not concern itself with the potential discomfort of the other powers and would formally capture the north east part of New Guinea. This was exactly the chasm between the German Empire and the Italian kingdom in the end of the 19th century.

The venture was repeated by the explorer Federico Lovera di Maria (1796-1871) and in 1873 by Enrico Alberto d'Albertis (1846-1932) and Odoardo Beccari (1843-1920) without significant results.⁸⁹ The ambitious explorers may have been coming into contact with local tribal chiefs and sultans of Indonesia and the Moluccas, however, the final decision rested with the Dutch government, nominal owner of these territories. The unsuitability of the soil for systematic cultivation, the great distance between Italy and New Guinea, which rendered the hypothetical dominion practically defenseless and effectively out of control, the refusal of the Dutch government to grant even a small part of its rights on the island, were the reasons for which the undertaking ran aground for the second time.⁹⁰ Additionally, Beccari explored the archipelago around Guinea, Elio Modigliani (1860-1932) the Indonesian archipelago and Enrico Hillyer Giglioli (1845-1909) Latin America.⁹¹

and Ambon every time I enquired" and with regards to the Key islands: "Holland in the past years had the opportunity to claim its protection...but since it never managed to obtain any proper concession or vassalage document, didn't have the slightest ownership on these islands" See Giuseppe Novero, *I prigionieri dei Savoia, La storia della Caienna italiana nel Borneo*, (Milan, 2011), p. 109.

⁸⁶ De Leone, *L'Italia in Africa*, pp. 40-45.

⁸⁷ Novero, *I prigionieri*, pp. 145-146.

⁸⁸ De Leone, *L'Italia in Africa* pp. 57-61.

⁸⁹ Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, pp. 527-535.

⁹⁰ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. VII, (Rome, 1983), p. 507.

⁹¹ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 42.

Areas of the Pacific such as Polynesia, a dominion which "in time could turn out to be very useful," were also temporarily examined.⁹²

Special mention, finally, should be made of the case of the British and Dutch-held island of Borneo, which was portioned in 1824, as well. The US consul in Hong Kong leased in 1865 for a ten year use the "most beautiful and fertile part of the island," which was managed by the American entrepreneur J. W. Torrey (1828-1885), who appeared willing to sublet the area to the Italian commander Racchia.⁹³ While the US government did not display any interest in this particular matter, Rome, after clarifications of the Dutch and British government, discovered that Torrey was not qualified for the favourable resolution of the issue; therefore, it addressed the Sultan himself,⁹⁴ who seemed willing to grant a site with a view to building a correctional facility.⁹⁵ Menambrea's government concealed from the parliament Racchia's mission of finding a suitable location for the deportation of the Southerner dissidents. The British Colonial Office in July 1870 opposed and finally declined such an eventuality. However, it was not entirely hostile to the idea "if the proposed Italian colony were to be simply a trading settlement" and "if we are not prepared to expand Trade in these rich districts we ought to be glad to see such a Country as that of Italy willing to do it". Precisely two years later the Italian ambassador in London sought the British Government's consent for a penal establishment in Banggi and a naval base in Gaya. Lord Granville George Leveson Gower (1815-1891) the British Foreign Secretary rebuffed these proposals. A foreign naval station in Borneo, so "close to the main lines of communication in the Eastern Seas" could have a disrupting effect on British commerce.⁹⁶ Furthermore, the consul of Italy in Singapore was many times the recipient of dissatisfaction and distrust mainly from the Dutch authorities, which arguably considered that the establishment of a colony of this kind would affect the safety of the transportations and commerce in the region.⁹⁷ Furthermore, raising another flag in Dutch or British territory would cause confusion to the natives and Europeans alike.⁹⁸ The preferable solution for the avoidance of diplomatic friction and quarrels would have been to find a location outside Dutch jurisdiction, such as Burma.⁹⁹ Even the Italian-Burmanese friendship and commerce treaty, signed in Mandalay on 3 March 1871 aroused some suspicions to the easily irascible British authorities.¹⁰⁰

⁹² Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. VI, (Rome, 1982), p. 651.

⁹³ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. III, (Rome, 1969), pp. 552-553.

⁹⁴ The Sultan of northwest Borneo, modern day Brunei, was required to consult his British overlords before any decision. The rest of the island was under Dutch rule.

⁹⁵ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. III, (Rome, 1969), pp. 562-563.

⁹⁶ Nicholas Tarling, *Imperialism in Southeast Asia 'A fleeting, passing phase'*, (London-New York, 2004), pp. 53-55.

⁹⁷ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. III, (Rome, 1969), p. 207.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 229.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 270.

¹⁰⁰ Novero, *I prigionieri*, p. 134.

Meanwhile, while part of the Italian public opinion, was forming an early colonial consciousness (Africanismo), the initially scientific and exploratory interest was giving way and gradually being set aside by a policy of interests and expansion. The geographical expeditions at the end of the 19th century, based on the ideas of civilizing, primacy, racism and vocation were intensified thanks to the organized efforts of geographical societies harmonized with the zeitgeist of the time. These societies focused their efforts in finding suitable places for the facilitation of the Italian economic penetration in Africa's interior and in establishing commercial stations and naval bases worldwide. Geographical studies covered this secret agenda, generated patriotic impulses and gave rise to the construction of a national identity. Colonial ideology was seen as an instrument of modernization, social cohesion and nationalization. This is the intellectual basis on which "Italy's colonial adventure", which was being presented to the people as a fascinating epic and as a means of resolving internal problems, was organized and initiated.¹⁰¹ The emerging public opinion now demanded financial opportunities and a better life in distant places, keeping pace with the aspirations and the growing interests of the shipping and the arms manufacturing industry.¹⁰² At this point it should be clarified that the late 19th century Italian governments were not able to shape a colonial consciousness or to effectively influence the public opinion since they simply did not have the technical wherewithal to do so. The telegraph system was not widespread, high illiteracy weighed down newspaper, journal and book circulation; budgetary deficiency was hampering the educational activities in schools and radio, cinema or other "propaganda" means would be discovered and put to use much later. The, initially moderate interest of the masses for Africa did not emerge as a product of regulated governmental policy but principally as a result of private initiatives by local communes, associations and clubs.¹⁰³

The first, par excellence, society of this kind was founded in Florence in 12 May 1867 with the title Italian Geographical Society (Società Geografica Italiana), with Negri as chairman. Its stated objectives were the promotion of Italy's commercial and naval interests, the facilitation of exploratory goals and the provision of assistance to the benefit of Africa's underdeveloped peoples.¹⁰⁴ This society organized numerous missions in Ethiopia (1876-1891), Tunisia (1875), Morocco (1876) and Somalia (1893), representing Italian ambitions and serving as a "useful and patriotic enterprise" to the government.¹⁰⁵ It furthermore organized a series of national geographic congresses, in which the policies of expansion, the demographic issue and scientific disciplines were inextricably amalgamated. As the opening of the Suez Canal approached, nourishing aspirations and prospects, Negri accelerated the

¹⁰¹ Randazzo, *Roma predona*, p. 12.

¹⁰² Surdich, "Il colonialismo italiano, l'imperialismo straccione", p. 6.

¹⁰³ Finaldi, *Italian national identity*, pp. 197-212.

¹⁰⁴ Giovanni Bosco Naitza, *Il Colonialismo nella storia d'Italia (1882-1949)*, (Florence, 1975), p. 7.

¹⁰⁵ David Atkinson, "Constructing Italian Africa", in *Italian Colonialism*, ed. M. Fuller, R. Ben-Ghiat, (New York, 2005), p. 17.

procedures and presented the society's statute as early as April 1867. On 20 January 1868 the statute was ratified by the 413 parliamentarians, aristocrats, military men, scientists, doctors and explorers that constituted the first members; in just two years, in May 1870, their number had ascended to include 1118 members, which shows that, to certain social strata, the interest in colonial matters was gradually growing. These illustrious members operated as pressure group and cultivated special relations with key government officials, aimed at obtaining a privileged treatment for their activities. For this exact reason the society's seat was relocated to Rome in early 1872. The very first exploration initiative it undertook was the organization of an auxiliary expedition to Stella's Sciotel. The colony's precarious state inspired and urged the fellows to "try to protect the co-nationals dwelling abroad, and simultaneously to expand the circle of the national commerce's influence". The operation was subsidized by the state's treasury since it was organized in Italy's behalf and "could open the entrance of industrial and commercial relations with the rich and virgin lands of Abyssinia".¹⁰⁶ The expedition led by the explorer Antinori departed on February 1870, but by the time they had reached Sciotel the colony was already deserted. Once there, this setback didn't stall the mission's information gathering and scientific research. The succession of the skeptic Negri by the more resolute Cesare Correnti (1815-1888) signaled a more energetic era for the Italian Geographical Society.¹⁰⁷

In February 1879 the Society for the Commercial Exploration of Africa (Società d'Esplorazione Commerciale in Africa) was founded in Milan with the participation of renowned financial figureheads of Lombardy.¹⁰⁸ This organization was mainly devoted to the commercial pacifist penetration in a worldwide scale and to the exploration of Libya.¹⁰⁹ Under the auspices of 19th century's Italian industrial and political elites, its founder the explorer Camperio put forth an economic penetration policy in northern Africa; he even applied to the Ottoman government for the concession of 100,000 hectares in the Libyan region of Gebel to enact an "agricultural colonization" experiment. Despite the failure of these ambitious efforts the association furthermore instituted four trading posts in Massaua, Hodeida, Zanzibar and Khartoum. Always under the financial sponsorship of the Milanese industrialists it founded the Italian Society for the African trade (Società italiana per il commercio coll'Africa) in the summer of 1880, which in its turn established the Commercial Agency of Bengasi and Derna in Libya in 1895-1896. The Italian Society for the African trade is considered the first concrete attempt to confer an economic

¹⁰⁶ The tone of these affirmations was absolutely compatible with Negri's appreciation of international trade with the Far East, Americas and especially Red Sea. See Cristoforo Negri, *Discorso del comm. Negri Cristoforo presidente della società geografica italiana all'adunanza generale dei membri della medesima il 15 dicembre 1867*, (Firenze, 1868), pp. 19-20.

¹⁰⁷ Daniele Natili, *Un laboratorio coloniale nell'Italia post-unitaria: La Società Geografica Italiana e le origini dell'espansione in Etiopia (1867-1883)*, Ph.D Dissertation, University of Tuscia di Viterbo, (Rome, 2008), pp. 56-82.

¹⁰⁸ Anna Milanini Kemeny, *La Società d'Esplorazione Commerciale in Africa e la Politica Coloniale (1879-1914)*, (Florence, 1973), pp. 55-60.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

direction to Italy's early colonial expansion. Among its conspicuous individual shareholders, the bank of Credito Italiano, the Rubattino company and the Banca Generale can be found. Nevertheless the elevated costs and the limited profitability possibilities of the Libyan and Ethiopian markets contributed to the bankruptcy of the association.¹¹⁰ Situated in Milan, late 19th century Italy's venue of moderatism and social liberalism, the Society for the Commercial Exploration of Africa was renouncing the "sterile military conquest" and the exacerbated expansion, apotheosized by certain circles in Southern Italy. Stereotypically the South, closely intertwined with the Mediterranean and by extension with the African region, distressed by the demographic problem, is considered adherent of expansionism, more pro-colonial than the industrial, economic penetration advocate, pacifist and progressive North of Italy.¹¹¹ For others, the despotic "North" having conquered parts of Africa and the South of Italy acted as a foreign occupation force and perceived both groups as savages and insubordinate bandits.¹¹²

The African Society of Italy (Società Africana d'Italia), founded in 1882, previously known as the Club Africano, with headquarters in Naples, was also occupied with the search for arable land and potential colonies for the resolution of the economic-demographic problem.¹¹³ The "Mediterranean destiny" and the search of a "promised land" were promoted by any means possible: geographical and ethnological studies, scientific activities, libraries, periodicals and relative conferences. The differentiated, more militant approach in regards to colonialism and the fact that it received higher state subsidies brought about the dispute and a rivalry with the other similar associations.¹¹⁴ As its branch the Society of Colonial Studies (Società di Studi Coloniali) based in Florence, was created in April 1884 upon the local Chamber of Commerce, the Foreign Ministry's and the Agricultural Ministry's tributes. Its function and propagandist operations were in line with the main Naples' office.

Similar societies were: the Association of Commercial Geography (Associazione di Geografia Commerciale) based in Bari, the Commission for Explorations in Africa (Comitato per le Esplorazioni in Africa) based in Turin and the Society of Exploration (Società d'Esplorazione) based in Genoa.¹¹⁵ First the

¹¹⁰ Gian Luca Podesta, "Gli investimenti italiani in Africa orientale 1869-1919", *Annali dell'Istituto italo-germanico in Trento*, v. 24, 1998, pp. 156-158.

¹¹¹ Giancarlo Monina, *Il consenso coloniale, Le Società geografiche e l'Istituto coloniale italiano (1896-1914)*, (Rome, 2002), pp. 34-35.

¹¹² Early photographs of captured Neapolitan bandits, during the brigandage war of 1861-1865, were astoundingly similar to those of African "treacherous" outlaws in chains. See Silvana Palma, "The Seen, the Unseen, the Invented: Misrepresentations of African "Otherness" in the Making of a colony. Eritrea (1885-1896), in *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, 45/177 (2005), pp. 41-45. For more on "colonial photography" and the first Italian photographers in Africa see Luigi Goglia, *Africa, Colonialismo, Fotografia: Il caso Italiano (1885-1940)*, (Messina, 1989), pp. 9-22.

¹¹³ Randazzo, *Roma predona*, p. 14.

¹¹⁴ Monina, *Il consenso coloniale*, pp. 41-42.

¹¹⁵ Del Boca, *L'Africa nella coscienza degli Italiani*, p. 8.

Neapolitan African Society created a center in which colonial propaganda could be forged and propagated and in which the products and the tropical colonization methods could be studied. The establishment of the Colonial Institute in Naples was soon to be followed in Rome, Palermo and Florence. In Rome a colonial museum was instituted as part of the botanic institute. In Palermo the city's botanic garden transformed into a colonial one and in Florence the formation of an agriculture-colonial institute was well underway.¹¹⁶ Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan's (1840-1914) theories on the unbreakable bond of naval power, commerce and expansion and the creation of pro-Navy organizations in England (Navy League), Germany (Flottenverein), France (Ligue Maritime Française) and Spain (Liga Maritima Española) arguably influenced the Italians. The Lega Navale Italiana association, established in 1897, promoted the idea of the construction of a sizeable commercial fleet as an instrument of economic development and prestige.¹¹⁷

Government support for these initiatives was centralized in a new Colonial Office in the 1890s. The creation of the colony Eritrea was accompanied by the creation of an office responsible for the colonial matters. In December 28 1893, the office of Eritrea and Protectorates, precursor of the colonial office, was re-inaugurated, a department with a view to address every political aspect of Italy's colonies; it was directly dependent to the Foreign Minister and his undersecretary. On 5 May 1895 a royal decree rendered the office administratively and politically autonomous. On 15 March 1896, immediately after the staggering Italian defeat in Adua, the office lost a great deal of its previous authority, shrank and finally merged with the first division of Political Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This temporary development highlights perfectly the sense of humiliation, surrender and pessimism that possessed Rome after the devastating Adua blow. The Colonial Office was restored by a royal act of 2 April 1900, which detached the Colonial office from the Foreign Ministry and restored it to its former autonomous executive status. One of its first acts was a secret agreement signed with the British in Rome on 22 November 1901 regarding the boundaries of Sudan, Eritrea and Ethiopia. The colonial office's staff, subdivided in two sectors, Office I Colonial Policy and Office II Colonial Administration, enacted various studies, published and preserved the relative diplomatic documents and draw up geographical maps. To assist to their extensive scope of responsibilities the Colonial Council was inaugurated on 24 May 1903. In April 1908 it evolved into the Central Management for the Colonial Affairs (Direzione Centrale per gli affari coloniali) and four years later (20 November 1912) it developed into the Colonial Ministry.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Monina, *Il consenso coloniale*, pp. 69-70.

¹¹⁷ Ludovica De Courten, *La marina mercantile italiana nella politica di espansione (1860-1914)*, *Industria, Finanza e Trasporti Maritimi*, (Rome, 1989), pp. 89-91.

¹¹⁸ Cesare Marinucci, "L'Amministrazione centrale coloniale dall'acquisto di Assab alla costituzione del Ministero delle Colonie" in *L'Italia in Africa, serie giuridico-amministrativa, v. I, (1869-1955)*, (Rome, 1963), pp. 13-15. According to the May 1914 royal act the Colonial Ministry undertook under its direction the telegraphic and cipher office, the Press office, the general direction of economic,

Industrialists like the ship owning Rubattino company, as we will see, were the instruments by which the country would finally acquire the position of power and influence. The cotton industrialists, aware of their internal market's saturation, as well as their inability compete with foreign firms due to the absence of protective tariffs, were captivated by the prospect of finding new outlets in Africa. Others, such as the famous Giovanni Battista Pirelli (1848-1932) were interested in importing raw materials in the most inexpensive way possible. They were stimulated by the statements of politicians like Onorato Caetani (1842-1917), who in 1879 during a parliamentary session, referring to Ethiopia's agricultural (cotton) possibilities, added that its forests could constitute an inexhaustible "source of extraordinary wealth, either by the medicinal and caoutchouc plants' products or by the lumbering of various species".¹¹⁹

The Italians in this period were "passionate with the idea of overseas dominions."¹²⁰ The newspapers which spread the inquiring and rash spirit of adventure to the Italian public were mainly *La Gazzetta Coloniale*, *L'Esploratore*, *Giornale di viaggi e geografia commerciale*, *L'Italia coloniale*,¹²¹ *Il Giornale delle Colonie*, *L'Italia Nelle Colonie*, *L'Idea Coloniale*, *L'Italia Colonizzatrice*.¹²² The most influential magazines were the *Bolletino della Societa africana d'Italia*, the *Bolletino della Societa geografica italiana* and the *Rivista geografica italiana*.¹²³

In the eve of the 20th century and under the dictations of the principals of modernization and progress, the above mentioned societies got involved in the delicate field of public instruction, nurturing a "progressive" model that revolved around ethnocentric and nationalistic notions. Under this context the societies held geographical-colonial seminars for the public, and a series of expansionist overseas oriented education institutions were founded, with the state's cooperation. Turin's International Institute, which was founded in 1867 under the auspices of the Foreign Ministry, was the first with a colonial character and curriculum. Similarly, in 1869 the Oriental Institute was established in Naples. Likewise in 1880 the law faculty of the

financial and personnel affairs, the general direction of civil affairs and of public works of the Italian colonies. Later legislation in 1925, 1926, 1930, 1934, 1935 altered once more and regulated the Ministry's competences and function. See Vincenzo Pellegrini, Anna Bertinelli, *Per la storia dell'amministrazione coloniale italiana*, (Milan, 1994), pp. 16-22.

¹¹⁹ Podesta, "Gli investimenti italiani", p. 154.

¹²⁰ Rosoni, *La colonia Eritrea*, p. 33. Correnti also stated in 1875: "For Italy (Africa) has an irresistible charm, it attracts us and it serves as a predetermined destination." See Gambi, *Geografia e imperialismo*, p. 11.

¹²¹ Its full title in English "Colonial Italy, instrument of our direct rule colonies and of the italians abroad" highlights perfectly the periodical's propagantistic porpuses. It comprised mainly photos, maps, illustrations and newscast from the Italian colonies.

¹²² We should remain wary about these periodicals' influence upon the Italian population since its illiteracy rates in 1860-1870 were at the verge of 75%, see Giuseppe Maria Finaldi, "Culture and Imperialism in a 'backward' nation? The Prima Guerra d'Africa (1885-1896) in Italian primary schools", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 8/3, (Nov. 2010), p. 3.

¹²³ Carla Ghezzi, *Colonie, Coloniali. Storie di donne, uomini e istituti fra Italia e Africa*, (Roma, 2003), pp. 53-57.

University of Naples inaugurated a number of colonial related courses, such as: international law, commercial and colonial economy, diplomatic history and geography. After the example of the Antwerp's Chamber of Commerce, the advanced schools of commerce of Venice (1868), Genoa (1884) and Bari (1886) were offering courses for the formation of entrepreneurs, consuls and colonial agents. Later, in September 1902 a similar commercial university was inaugurated in Milan. In 1889, in Rome, the organization Dante Alighieri for "the defense of the national tradition and language abroad" was set up. The society was also acting to stimulate the transatlantic trade between the metropolis and Latin America, where the most loyal consumers of Italian products were located, the Italian immigrants.¹²⁴ Through the construction and preservation of Italian schools abroad, the organization established outposts of the idea of the Greater Italy, aimed at "safekeeping the relations of the mother country with the compatriots" and advancing "peaceful and commercial Italian penetration" to the world.

In the nation's elementary and primary schools, world history and geography were taught in a way to promote the creation of the Italian identity by projecting the dichotomy between the civilized white and the colonized backward "other", and to superinduce patriotic notions.¹²⁵ Colonial education in the higher educational institutions consisted of ethno-anthropological and climatologic courses, foreign languages, politics, economics, "colonial" and "commercial" geography, mineralogy, tropical medicine, naval hygiene and "colonization sciences" that were focusing on the application of the legislation and the scientific methods in the agricultural-demographic field. The Minister of Education Nunzio Nasi's (1850-1935) in 1901 promoted this curriculum to some of the country's universities to "spread a kind of colonial education that could better direct the growing movement in many regions of our country; an education able to arouse initiatives, responsibilities and ingenuity. Because the success of the colonial enterprises demands mainly strength of character and knowledge of the world". In conformity to these statements, the economic-administrative school of the Law faculty in Rome was remodeled into the diplomatic-colonial school.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Miège, *L'Imperialismo coloniale Italiano*, pp. 44-45.

¹²⁵ After 1885 the curriculum of the Italian commercial technical schools included subjects such as the ancient Phoenician-Greek-Roman colonies, Venice's colonies, the discovery and exploration of the New World, the British conquest of India among others. The history of the colonies, as complementary to the subject of world history, promoted the knowledge of the "European colonies in Africa". In 1888 the entrance examination for the Royal Naval Academy required knowledge of European possessions and of the various races as classified by their degree of "civilization". In 1891 and under the Minister of Education, Pasquale Villari (1827-1917) the middle and high school history textbooks projected the white race as the main agent of historical development: "the prevalence of the Caucasian race in the history of Civilization" was part of the middle school fourth year's history program while in their 3rd year, young Italians studied the "European possessions" in Africa and Asia. In the early 20th century, Italian children in elementary schools were finally taught about their country's colonies in Africa and the Italian communities abroad. See Gianluca Gabrielli, *Insegnare le colonie. La costruzione dell'identità e dell'alterità coloniale nella scuola italiana (1860-1950)*, Ph.D Dissertation, Macerata University, (2014), pp. 35-39.

¹²⁶ Monina, *Il consenso coloniale*, pp. 61-67.

According to the politician and journalist Filippo Turati (1857-1932), the "African enterprise" is mainly a phenomenon not of capitalism but of militarism, harmonized with the aspirations of Italy's royal dynasty, the Sabaudi.¹²⁷ There were also those who really believed that Italy did not conquer, or coerce, but it civilizes. The Catholic Church, on occasions was playing a key role to the idea of subordinating barbaric peoples to the culturally superior Rome, via its famous newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*.¹²⁸ Catholic nationalism was presenting the inclination for colonialism as a pious act, under the guise of humanitarianism and idealism. The Church was always ready to commemorate the Italian soldiers fallen in Africa and did not express doubts in the righteousness of European expansion, identifying it as a mission of progress and enlightenment. As far as the Italian state's role, however, it held a rather ambiguous stance. Many Catholics hailed the prospect of the propagation of the Catholic faith in new, distant fields of activity, espousing the colonial doctrine. Those however, still unwilling to recognize the "immoral" liberal state that violated so defiantly the Papal state's integrity, were anti-colonial as colonialism was affiliated to and projected by the usurper Italian governments.¹²⁹ These went as far as to interpret the disaster of Adwa in terms of divine punishment against the state-denier of ecclesiastical privileges.¹³⁰ When, decades later, these frictions and discords simmered down the Church, officially and unofficially, embraced the colonial enterprise wholeheartedly.¹³¹

¹²⁷ Naitza, *Il Colonialismo*, p. 14.

¹²⁸ Aruffo, *Storia del colonialismo*, p. 32. Characteristically, a year after an Italian defeat by the Ethiopians the columnist, exalting the "true patriotism" and the "real valor" of the fallen Italian soldiers, regretted the lack of vengeance and punishment until then. See "Bollettino Politico", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 25, Friday 27 January 1888, p. 1. Likewise, in a similar occasion "the historical fame of Italian valor" was demonstrated against the "barbarians". See "Il Disastro di Massaua", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 27, Friday 4 February 1887, p. 1.

¹²⁹ In the period under hand the literary attacks of the *L'Osservatore Romano's* columnists to the Italian government were frequent: The illegitimate government and the liberal press were "unfit" and "insufficient" and their Tunisian policies "humiliated", see "Bollettino Politico", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 110, Saturday 14 May 1881, p. 1; Italy is isolated and has provoked the French animosity but what is even worse is the fact that it detaches ships and men in Africa without invoking first "the God's protection and the Church's blessings", see "Bollettino Politico" *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 24, Friday 30 January 1885, p. 1.; The government carries on its African "nonsense" bringing forward "an absolutely erroneous political and military plan, see "Dopo Makalle", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 21, Monday 27-Tuesday 28 January 1896, p. 1; The Ethiopians are fighting a just war for their independence whereas the government is involved in a "grandeur craziness", see "Guerra Nazionale", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 48, Friday 21-Saturday 22 February 1896, pp. 1-2; Italy's agricultural production amounts to one third of the English one the value of its trade is even inferior to Belgium's. The "colonial policy is wrong", see "La Politica Africana", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 290, Monday 16-Tuesday 17 December 1895, pp. 1-2; The government is not just "incompetent" but also "irresponsible", "careless", and in addition it mocks and conceals the African events from the people, see "I Fatti d'Africa", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 287, Thursday 12-Friday 13 December 1895, p. 1.

¹³⁰ The period 1831-1903 is marked by the gradual rise of a peculiar Catholic nationalism under the popes Gregorio XVI, Pio IX and Leone XIII. See Aruffo, *Storia del colonialismo*, p. 31.

¹³¹ Finaldi, *Italian national identity*, pp. 214-225.

Additionally, Abbot Antonio Stoppani (1824-1891) expressing the views of a large part of the clergy stated in 1887: "Civilizing is a most heavy and inescapable burden for civilized nations, which is imposed by humanitarianism and justice...Italy, is required to do its duty."¹³² A different theoretical approach to the Italian colonialism was expressed by the Foreign Minister Pasquale Stanislao Mancini (1817-1888), who in addressing the parliament on 27 January 1885 professed that if Italy wanted to become an economic and maritime power it had to participate in some way in the colonial race, a vehicle of modernization and prestige.¹³³ The Italians sought with victories and overseas conquests to be recognized as a Great Power, to gain stature and voice in European conferences through success in Africa. The more romantic envisaged the wonders of Africa and claimed that colonialism would end the sad phenomenon of slave trading, settle the issue of the arms and liquor trade in the Dark Continent, and guarantee mutual economic interests. Colonialism would maintain order, protect the lives of European travelers, and spread civilization and education.¹³⁴ According to others the Dark Continent stood as a source of raw materials, a Land of Promise which was able to divert the flow of migration from America to Africa.¹³⁵

At the opposite end, despite the trend of the time, there were those who were treating with caution and skepticism the government's imperialist intentions for moral and most often economic reasons (antiafricanismo).¹³⁶ They expressed doubt in the ability to civilize backward peoples, and were troubled about the economic impact that the colonial venture would have on the Italian people.¹³⁷ The "dissidents" were arguing that Italy had "Africa at its home"¹³⁸ and were labelling the expansionists as traitors of the Risorgimento ideals.¹³⁹ The longer the colonial policy did not bring any benefits, but rather defeats and disgrace, the more voices calling for abandoning the colonial vision would grow.

What is certain is that there cannot be absoluteness in drawing conclusions about a subject so complex and multi-dimensional. The "African tendency", the theoretical basis behind Italian colonialism, went through many stages. It evolved

¹³² Rosoni, *La colonia Eritrea*, p. 33.

¹³³ Randazzo, *Roma predona*, p. 17.

¹³⁴ Rosoni, *La colonia Eritrea*, p. 36.

¹³⁵ Edoardo Scarfaglio, *Viaggio in Abissinia, nascita del colonialismo italiano*, (Palermo, 2003), pp. 61-62.

¹³⁶ Gambi, *Geografia e imperialismo*, p. 15.

¹³⁷ The anti-imperialists did not find any usefulness in colonies and believed that the sacrifices of the Italian people, in blood and money, would not yield any worthwhile profit. Armed with humour and cartoons, they often taunted the grandiose visions of their fellow citizens. "What is 20 million a year compared to so much glory?" See Scarfaglio, *Viaggio in Abissinia*, p. 64.

¹³⁸ The 1891 colonial exposition that took place in Palermo, a celebration of Italy's acquired colonies, led the press to link the living conditions of the barbarians to the "primitive" Sicilian peasantry in need of Northern direction. See Emily Brown, "Italia Barbara: Italian primitives from Piero to Pasolini" in *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 17/3 2012, pp. 260-264.

¹³⁹ Rosoni, *La colonia Eritrea*, p. 115.

from general indifference into a fever of exploration and a spirit of adventure. There was the romantic Africanism, inspired by the glorious past, and the Africanism based on geopolitical concerns. There was one Africanism that was emanating from confidence and enthusiasm and one that was feeding from the fear of exclusion and of antagonism or from arrogance. There was even an Africanism which served the interests of the developed North and one diametrically opposed, who promised better life for the farmers of the South. One with a view to finding fertile land to solve the demographic problem and, at the same time, build prisons. There was finally a vain Africanism of the royal house of Italy and an apostolic of the Catholic missionaries.¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰ Aruffo, *Storia del colonialismo*, p. 24.

4. Italy's politico-strategic position in the Mediterranean

In the wake of the Unification the Italian expansionist designs were aimed, as expected, towards the opposite shore of the Mediterranean. The barrage of developments that were taking place in this vital area for Rome would shape its future alliances and colonial policy in Africa. The fear of French aggression on the coast of North Africa drove Rome to the camp of the Central Powers, a diplomatic event of colossal importance for Europe's historical evolution until the First World War. The disturbance of the Mediterranean balance, when France occupied Tunisia and Britain Cyprus and Egypt, caused stress, anxiety and confusion among the statesmen of Italy, a fact which is reflected in their subsequent erroneous choices. The frustrations, the inability to find a colony in proximity to Italy's geographical area and the diplomatic defeats led Rome by inference to the Red Sea and the destruction of 1896. Had Italy occupied Tunisia or Libya in the period 1870-1885, could it have avoided the costs in blood and money in its attack in Ethiopia? We will never know. In this chapter the actions of the Italian governments during the most important Mediterranean crises until 1890, shall be examined in an attempt to understand the reasoning and the impact of their decisions. The goal is to discover and interpret the underlying causes of the Italian colonial phenomenon during the 19th century by shedding light on the European diplomatic backstage of the era and by scrutinizing the reasons behind the Italian inability to impose its rule over target-areas that were hypothetically within reach. The diplomacy and initiatives of the crucial Tunisian issue, the Egyptian crisis of 1882 and the repeated suggestions to capture Libya will be examined.

As has been seen, all the advantages gained on the battlefield by the Russian army during the Russo-Turkish 1877-1878 clash were ultimately nullified by the rest of the Great Powers in the Berlin Congress of June-July 1878. The mitigation of the "just" Russian demands weighted over Chancellor Bismarck, the chairman of the congress, who was supposedly promoting the Austro-Hungarian interests in the Balkans. Russia was infuriated by Bismarck's pro Austrian attitude during the Berlin conference proceedings, a fact that led the chancellor to strengthen Berlin's ties with Vienna via a formal defensive alliance concluded on 7 October 1879.¹ Surprisingly enough this bold move and the prospect of being isolated intimidated the Russians enough to join Germany and Austro-Hungary in June 1881, and in 1884 to renew their commitment.² Maintaining the alliance with the Russian and Austria-Hungarian empires at any cost and intimidating or flattering the Third French Republic were the central points of the late 19th century German policy. This policy safeguarded Germany from any external danger and positioned it in a preeminent international role. The profound complexity of the chancellor's calculations and cunning schemes

¹ Charles Downer Hazen, *Europe since 1815*, vol. 1, (New York, 1927), p. 296.

² Nichols J. Alden, *The year of the three Kaisers. Bismarck and the German succession 1887-1888*, (Chicago, 1987), pp. 10-11.

are still fascinating the historians. His flexibility and immediate adjustment to every international circumstance to promote German interests from the early 1860s until 1890 is remarkable. In the late 19th century every power whenever engaged in a discord or rivalry from the Mediterranean to the China Sea sought Germany's cooperation and approval as a great military power and thus arbiter of the international system. The fear of isolation and the aura of German supremacy constructed meticulously by Bismarck contributed to this inclination. The chancellor in exchange tried to satisfy everyone. For the sake of peace in Europe, Bismarck at the time did not nurture any territorial expansion, appeared agreeable to the designs of others, and promoted what appeared to him a waste of significant resources; Britain's involvement in Egypt, France's in Westerns Africa, Austria-Hungary's and Russia's in the Balkans.³

To some historians Bismarck's objective after the triumph in the 1871 Franco-Prussian war was to keep France occupied with affairs in areas far away from Europe. Favourable relations were sought to soothe the revanchionist spirit; diplomatic support was provided to instigate a French strategy of distant and resource-consuming overextension away from the German borders. Under this light the chancellor's pro French attitude, the policy of encouraging French claims, that reached its climax when the ardent colonialist Ferry came to power in 1880, makes perfect sense. Characteristically, on 17 December 1885 the island of Madagascar came officially under French control. In the previous years and more specifically since early 1882 when the question of the island's sovereignty came out, Berlin did whatever was possible to facilitate the French occupation. Whereas London opposed Paris' claims, as the island is situated along the sensitive route to India, Germany accepted unreservedly France's imposed naval blockade and military actions. In another occasion, during the 1883-1886 French-Chinese clash over Indochina, Bismarck displayed his solidarity to Paris' interests by refusing to intervene when a Chinese delegation asked his mediation and by halting the delivery of a German made warship to the Beijing government. As for his Egyptian policy, his maneuverings were less straightforward and more obscure. In April 1885 his trusty French collaborator Ferry fell from office while in Britain the conservative Salisbury came to power making an eventual understanding feasible. Unable to decide who to support and without taking unduly risks, he silenced the Porte and promoted alternately both French and British pretensions upon the North African province.⁴ In numerous occasions he threatened London that he would withdraw his support in Egypt if the German demands in other fields were not met.⁵ In regard to the Tunisian crisis the German support of France had a dual scope: to render an Italian rapprochement with France impossible, thus laying the groundwork for a future German-Austrian-Italian alliance; and to satisfy France, a satisfaction that would eventually isolate it. The chancellor backed the

³ W. N. Medlicott, *Bismarck, Gladstone and the concert of Europe*, (London, 1956), p. 115.

⁴ Pearl Boring Mitchell, *The Bismarckian policy of conciliation with France 1875-1885*, (London, 1935), pp. 131-168.

⁵ Arkadij Erusalimskij Samsonovic, *Bismarck: Diplomazia e Militarismo*, (Rome, 1969), p. 233.

French actions through the German consul in Tunis, encouraged the French consul in Berlin Count Saint-Vallier Charles Raymond (1833-1886) particularly in 1879-1880, encumbered the Italian pretensions by demonstrating his disapproval of Italian initiatives, and finally convinced Austria and Britain that it would be wise to appease the French.⁶ London's persistence in maintaining the status quo and Turkish or Italian opposition would not be able to shape the course of events as it will be seen.⁷

Tunisia had been a field of antagonism between the Great Powers many times before because of its strategic position in the middle of the Mediterranean. Since 1574 it constituted a dominion of the Ottoman Sultan, however, the great distance from the centre of authority, Istanbul, the administrative difficulties and European scheming rendered it virtually independent. The autonomous governor bore the title of Bey, and his independence demonstrated the loose ties between Istanbul and Tunis. Its independence was rendered precarious after the occupation of the neighbouring Algeria by the French in 1830 whereas in the East, Libya was under Ottoman control. In 1835 the Ottomans tried to restore their absolute rule in Tunisia but failed because of the French reactions and thus the province retained the shaky existing regime.⁸ Clearly, the defense of the Bey's freedom by Paris was aimed at serving its own interests. Following French "advice", Mohammed es Saddok Bey (1859-1882) granted a constitution in 1859, organized a military force and attempted to associate his country more closely with the European socio-economic system.⁹ Western influence prevailed thereafter, promoting modernization which in turn brought about the conclusion of loans from European financial institutions.¹⁰ The construction of railways and ports led the country into bankruptcy in 1869 and placed it under the direct control of its Italian, French and British creditors.¹¹

For Rome the fate of Tunisia was of such critical importance that it would settle the matter of its induction into the circle of the Great Powers. Because of its geographic position it was always a reference point and a natural outlet for both the residents of Sicily and the fighters of the Risorgimento era, who were searching for a safe refuge.¹² More specifically, in 1842 a branch of Mazzini's Giovine Italia organization was active in Tunis with the name "Legione Italiana". As the revolutionary zeal was cementing, a firearms depot was created in Tunis with the purpose of supplying the Sicilian revolutionaries when the time came. After 1850, Tunis had become a great center of the Italian revolutionary movement. According to Mazzini's plan, as he reported it in 1852, this nucleus would organize an expedition of Italian revolutionaries to the opposite shore of Sicily giving rise to an insurrection,

⁶ Mitchell, *The Bismarckian policy*, pp. 121-124.

⁷ Medlicott, *Bismarck, Gladstone*, p. 119.

⁸ Nikos Psiroukis, *History of Colonialism, the Culmination*, vol. 3, (Nicosia, 1993), p. 252.

⁹ Tommaso Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale e Francesco Crispi*, (Milan, 1928), pp. 8-9.

¹⁰ Psiroukis, *Colonialism, the Culmination*, p. 252.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

¹² Aldo G. Ricci, "La ferrovia Tunisi-La Goletta nella crisi italo-francese del 1880-1881", in *Fonti e Problemi della politica Coloniale Italiana*, ed. Carla Ghezzi, (Rome, 1996), p. 1051.

through a landing operation similar to Garibaldi's in Marsala 8 years later. Later on, during the Italian peninsula's troubled times many immigrated to Tunis, which seemed to be a safe haven for the rebels and unwanted or for those who desired to live as free men.¹³

Hence, numerous Italian protagonists after the Unification as well as the general public viewed the expansion of the New Italy in the region as a natural outcome. In this way, the African country would be placed under the protection of Rome and, in addition, it would supply the Italian industry with raw materials. According to the experts and those nostalgic for the Roman rule over ancient Carthage, Tunisia would be able to absorb the Italian products and 15 million immigrants, and contribute to the country's territorial completion.¹⁴ Two important factors in Rome's interest was an ambitious policy that wanted as provinces of the Italian kingdom all those regions that hosted important Italian communities, and on the other hand reasons of strategic security in the Mediterranean.¹⁵ Consequently the protection of the Italian immigrants and the short distance of the Regency from the Sicilian shores were additional incentives for the coveted expansion.¹⁶ Deputy Abele Damiani (1835-1905), colourfully stated in 1879 that Tunisia was still the "last open door" for Italian expansion and that it should be part of the new kingdom for historical, economic and security reasons.¹⁷

The Italo-Tunisian relations had undergone many fluctuations throughout the centuries; from profound animosity to intimate collaboration and vice versa. As early as 971, the Venetians had signed commercial treaties with the Tunisians. The rest of the Italian states followed suit: Amalfi in 1070, Gaeta in 1100, Pisa in 1113 and afterwards the city states of Trapani, Palermo, Livorno,¹⁸ Messina, Salerno and Napoli. In comparison the French created their first warehouse on Tunisian soil as late as 1577.¹⁹ In more recent times, the first Italian school was inaugurated in 1821 which constituted the very first public school in Tunisia. At the end of 1833 two Italian military officers were employed as instructors for the Tunisian army and on March 25 1838 the first Tunisian newspaper was published under the title *Giornale di Tunisi e Cartagine* by Italian immigrants. At the same time Italian influence was expanding; schools, churches, chapels were erected year after year and Italian monks and priests

¹³ Nullo Pasotti, *Italiani e Italia in Tunisia prima del protettorato francese*, (Tunis, 1964), pp. 14-18.

¹⁴ Attilio Brunialti, *Le colonie degli italiani i primi tentativi e le prime ricerche di una colonia in Italia (1861-1882)*, (Turin, 1897), p. 362.

¹⁵ Fabio Cusin, *L'Italia unita 1860-1878*, (Udine, 1952), p. 363.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 362. The occupation of Tunisia would strengthen the strategic position of the metropolis, solve the migration problem, contribute to the protection of the local Italian community and make both sides financially robust. Thus, Tunisia too would exit the economic impasse and would be modernized. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. VI, (Rome, 1979), pp. 557-559.

¹⁷ J.L. Miège, *L'Imperialismo coloniale Italiano dal 1870 ai giorni nostri*, (Milan, 1976), pp. 33-34.

¹⁸ A vivid community of Jew merchants was active in Tunisia and retained close ties with the Jews of Livorno from the early 15th century. See Maurizio Vernassa. "Presenze toscane nella reggenza di Tunisi (1843-1851)" in *Tunisia e Toscana*, ed. V. A. Salvadorini, (Pisa, 2002), pp. 434-435.

¹⁹ Nicola Marchitto, *L'Italia in Tunisia*, (Rome, 1942), pp. 3-10.

assumed the responsibility of educating the young immigrants.²⁰ In 1857 an Italian post office was established, as a branch of Cagliari's postal department and in 1865 the Italian telegraph line between Marsala and Bizerte was inaugurated. Five years later an old dream of Cavour came true when Palermo was linked with Tunis by sea. On 4 January 1864 the Collegio Italiano was established with the Italian government's subsidies. Its mission was to spread the Italian culture abroad. On September 8 1868 a new treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation was signed between the two parties, a treaty that encompassed all the previous Italo-Tunisian treaties, extended the privileges and enhanced the political and commercial activity directed by Rome.²¹ In 1877 Tunisia's closest commercial partner was Italy. Out of 207 steamships reaching Tunisian ports 102 were Italian and 49 French. As for the sailing ships from a total of 240,183 flew the Italian flag while only 9 the French.²²

Indeed, the Italian community of Tunisia, mainly of Sicilian origin, numbered 30,000 people in 1878, and was more populous than all the other European communities combined.²³ Italians seemed to prefer settling in Tunisia because of the relative freedom and advantages for the Europeans under the regime of capitulations and the consular protection system. Also their technical skills were far more evolved and thus more appreciated by wealthier Tunisians who employed Italians to help build public works, and assist in farming and fishing activities. The importance of the country to Rome can be illustrated by the persistent efforts of the Italian government to control communications, to establish schools, and to build infrastructure and railways. Members of the Italian minority worked at the country's custom houses; key positions of the state apparatus and services were in the hands of the Italians; the Bey's most important consultants were Italian; Italian farmers were cultivating the fertile Tunisian land contributing to the modernization of the country; Italian schools were promoting and spreading Latin culture. Education, commerce, and the banks were largely controlled by Italians and their language was the most prevalent after the local Arabic. The Italian minority, with the aid of the Italian government, had achieved a privileged position, a fact that gave Rome the right to dream of its domination over the country.²⁴ Prime Minister Cairoli said about the matter: "Our community in Tunisia is distinguished for its profitable industries, for its business initiatives and by a patriotic flame that never burned out. Because of this, the government is obliged to protect it in a dual manner; by maintaining political status quo favourable to its interests, and by developing its economic and material interests," while the Foreign Minister stressed that no important event in Tunisia could "remain alien" to the interests of the Italian policy.²⁵ Italy could not allow these colonists to

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 17-27.

²¹ Pasotti, *Italiani e Italia*, pp. 25-38.

²² Gianni Marilotti, "La Tunisia sotto il protettorato francese" in *L'Italia e il Nord Africa. L'emigrazione sarda in Tunisia (1848-1914)*, ed. G. Marilotti, (Rome, 2006), p.74.

²³ Robert Michels, *L'Imperialismo Italiano*, (Milan, 1914), p. 89.

²⁴ Renato Camussi, *Diritti Italiani nel mondo, Corsica, Nizza e Savoia, Tunisi, Suez, Gibuti*, (Milan, 1939), p. 85.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 85.

become alienated from the national body, in such a critical area for its geopolitical interests.²⁶ Thus, the Italian ruling class, ideologically charged with visions of destiny and of Rome's calling to civilize Mediterranean Africa, developed in the Regency a competitive edge, a prominent socio-political position which Paris combated with all possible means.²⁷

Naturally enough the intensity of the Italian activities met with the displeasure of the Bey. In 1830 mistreatment and oppression of the Italian community led to the intervention of the Piedmontese-Sardinian fleet. When the Italian frigates appeared in the waters of Goleta in May 17 the Bey gave in to the Italian demands. This incident led, on February 22 1832, to the stipulation of the friendship and commerce treaty, an agreement that broadened even further the Italian privileges. The lack of compliance to some of the treaty's clauses by the bey was the reason for yet another naval demonstration in Tunisian waters that resulted once more with the satisfaction of the Italian demands. In 1831 a small Piedmontese boat was seized by the Tunisian authorities. The crew was abused and the flag trampled on. Some days after the incident a Piedmontese war ship appeared at the same shores to demand moral satisfaction from the bey, who eventually gave into the demands. The first dynamic attempt to impose and expand Italian influence on the Regency is considered to be that of 1844, when the naval fleet of the kingdom of Piedmont turned up menacingly in Tunisian waters forcing the bey with this display of power to meet the Italian claims.²⁸ This crisis had broken out in September 1843 when negotiations for a commercial treaty between the Bey and the Piedmontese consul broke down in a heated argument. The French intervened to resolve the warlike situation while the Tunisians were erecting coastal fortifications and preparing to repel eventual naval attacks. In January 1844 the Italian commander is said to have been contemplating the possibility of a landing operation or even of a naval bombardment but the English consul mediated fearing that a belligerent Italian action would provoke a French invasion. The conflict was avoided and the issue was resolved diplomatically as eventually reason prevailed. The king of Piedmont Carlo Alberto (1798-1849) declared that he considered the bey's huge expenses to fortify his shores as sufficient punishment. After that incident the bilateral relations became cordial again.²⁹

The next opportunity to consolidate Italian supremacy in Tunisia occurred during the revolution of 1864. The bey's subjugation to his European principals, his over-indebtedness, a result of the continued borrowing, and the grim situation of the lower social strata led an enraged mob to murder European nationals at El Kef, and then to open conflict.³⁰ Italy, Britain and France seeing the until then docile regime

²⁶ Miège, *L'Imperialismo coloniale Italiano*, p. 32.

²⁷ Mario Missiroli, *Da Tunisi a Versailles*, (Rome, 1937-8), pp. 29-30.

²⁸ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 361.

²⁹ Marchitto, *L'Italia*, pp. 20-23.

³⁰ Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale*, p. 9.

being threatened, dispatched their fleets to Goleta with the goal of enforcing order.³¹ The allied co-operation suffered cracks due to the different goals of each side. The French who had their eye on Tunisia and wished to annex it to their Algerian colony proposed the landing and occupation of the country, a suggestion which was flatly opposed by the British. At a time when bilateral relations had been disrupted and indecision characterized the allied camp, the Italians had a rare opportunity to act and to present the Europeans with a *fait accompli*. The Italian General Staff was working on a plan for the capture of Tunis and Vice Admiral Augusto Albini (1830-1909), after receiving reinforcements on April 30 and May 12, suggested giving "a political character" to the occupation.³² Fearful of a French *fait accompli*, Albini reflected upon the landing and capture of La Goletta and Tunis by an Italian force of 4,000.³³ The plan was never implemented because of the opposition of the other two Powers.³⁴ In September of 1864 the bey finally brought under his control the rebel territories and thus the opportunity was wasted.

After the closure of the matter, Napoleon III proposed to Italy the partition of Tunisia.³⁵ The French would naturally appropriate the western part and the Italians the eastern.³⁶ The government, at the time based in Turin, considered that the proposal "was not worth the trouble" and in addition Foreign Minister Venosta claimed that Italy "could not allow itself the luxury of an Algeria."³⁷ Despite the negative outcome of the matter there were signs of encouraging developments for the Italian policy of influence and prestige. Displays of naval power in Tunisia had been carried out in the past by the Italian city states. However, it was in 1864 that for the first time a concerted intervention of the national fleet took place, even with assistance, with the aim of "protecting the life and property of the fellow-countrymen" that were residing there.³⁸ The young state revealed its designs in the typical and arrogant way of a Great

³¹ The Italian consul advised his government on 23 April 1864, so that it would send warships for the safety of the Italian immigrants of Tunisia. The Tunisians' rebellion and the subsequent volatile situation obliged the Italian government to send a squadron to protect the Italian population's security. In a short time the frigates "Garibaldi", "Maria Adelaide", "Duca di Genoa" and the corvettes "Etna" and "Magenta" were dispatched. See Ricci, *La ferrovia Tunisi-La Goletta*, p. 1078.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 1079.

³³ Albini personally asked the bey's consent for the Italian action on June 20 without consulting his French and British colleagues and in contrast to Foreign Minister Venosta's resolution for peace. See Antonello Battaglia, "The First Tunisian Crisis (1864)" in *Empires and Nations from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century: Volume 2*, ed. A. Biagini and G. Motta, (Newcastle, 2014), pp. 15-17.

³⁴ In such a case the hostility of Paris is considered as a given due to identical ambitions. However, neither London was inclined to see the Sicilian Strait controlled by one, even weak at the time, power such as Italy. See Ricci, *La ferrovia Tunisi-La Goletta*, p. 1079.

³⁵ In 1864 a French project to divide Tunisia in two parts, the northern controlled by the French and the southern by the Italians was abandoned as a result of firm opposition by the British. A similar offer was made by Napoleon III providing that Italy would renounce Rome and return it to the Pope. As late as 1890 the Italian consul in Tunis, counting on Berlin's diplomatic support, was still foreseeing a just partition of the country. See Marilotti, *La Tunisia*, p. 76.

³⁶ Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale*, p. 9.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³⁸ Ricci, *La ferrovia Tunisi-La Goletta*, p. 1080.

Power, making it known to everyone that it considered Tunisia a zone of influence of fundamental value. So began a period of acute confrontation with France which was putting into practice its own expansionary plans in the Mediterranean.

In the following years the bey, balancing between the two warring sides, managed to maintain the autonomy of his country.³⁹ In reality, neither Italy, still unstable and tormented by socio-economic issues, nor France, weakened after the 1870 Franco-Prussian war, was in a position to proceed with the military occupation of Tunisia. The only thing that they could do was to extend their influence and to put up obstacles preventing the other from obtaining the upper hand in the bey's court. The Italian position was further improved by 3 more conventions signed in January 1871 granting a series of new exclusive privileges. These included freedom of action for the Italian businesses and a clause awarding to Italy the status of the most favourable nation. On the contrary France was investing huge amounts on schools and railroads, and saw Tunisia as an extension of Algeria and the Bizerte port as a natural supplement to its strategic safety in the Mediterranean. Despite the public outcry that "every franc spent in Africa is a step back from the Rhine", Ferry's vague desire of expansion was motivated by international, economic and "Algerian" motives; Muslim fraternities operated through Tunisia in Algeria, Libya and Egypt inciting and arousing nomad tribes to defy European penetration.⁴⁰ The regency's gradual internal disintegration and its inability to settle its debt and to subsist on its meager fiscal income created the conditions for European interference. Moreover, the state's revenues had proved insufficient to repay the interest of the public debt. The Bey's negotiations with his creditors resulted in the establishment of a tripartite Italo-French-English control over the finances of the state on 5 July 1869; this international financial commission was to guarantee the repayment of the bey's debt principally towards the French bank Erlanger and the Italian Banca Nazionale di Torino.⁴¹ Over-indebtedness⁴² and external control meant that the Tunisian government was not independent and was acting under the directives of the Italian, English and French consuls. Thus a struggle for supremacy began, in which Italy's well integrated commercial predominance clashed with the French organized but indirect policy of financial investments.

In 1868 France seemed to take a short lead when its consul persuaded the bey to put up all the country's tax revenue as guarantee for the repayment of loans which he had concluded with French financiers.⁴³ Rome and London strongly opposed this initiative, and thus the favourable for the French interests' arrangement was nullified. The Menabrea government was keen to exploit this success. On 8 September 1868 it

³⁹ Psiroukis, *Colonialism, the Culmination*, p. 255.

⁴⁰ Stephen H. Roberts, *The history of French colonial policy 1870-1925*, (London, 1963), pp. 260-262.

⁴¹ Gianfranco Torre, "Il trust sardo-ligure e la valorizzazione dell'economia tunisina" in *L'Italia e il Nord Africa. L'emigrazione sarda in Tunisia (1848-1914)*, ed. G. Marilotti, (Rome, 2006), p. 30.

⁴² Indicatively, in the 1880s the deficit of the regency had reached 170 million francs as a result of the clumsy financial management and resorting to foreign loans. See Pasotti, *Italiani e Italia*, pp. 30-33.

⁴³ Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale*, p. 10.

concluded a treaty with the bey which settled to Rome's benefit all the issues between them.⁴⁴ Italy, under the clause of the most-favoured state, extracted significant benefits in the fields of agriculture, fishery, legal rights and shipping.⁴⁵ The Italian community of Tunisia suddenly found itself markedly more favoured and strengthened in relation to the rest of the bey's foreign subjects.⁴⁶ These conjunctures and the international developments meant that Italy would be established as a Mediterranean force and that it would finally obtain an African dominion. Rome, having done what was necessary, seemed at the time to prevail in the struggle with France for the influence in Tunisia and was ready to reap the fruits of its labours.⁴⁷ The last step that appeared to remain before Italy could annex the region or impose a protectorate was to overcome the French objections. The Italian government hoped this could be achieved through diplomatic channels and the moral support of the Great Powers. The last part of the match would be played in the European Privy Councils. For this reason it would be useful to mention the diplomatic negotiations and the relations of the Great Powers in this period under examination.

After the defeat and the humiliation of France in 1871, a power vacuum in the Mediterranean was created, a vacuum, that as the British reckoned, could be filled by Italy, a state that was well-disposed towards them, with designs in Africa and in the Balkans, and the inclination to assume a primary role in the Mediterranean. In March 1878 a British delegation proposed to Prime Minister Depretis an alliance, i.e., an understanding for the joint "preservation and protection of the commercial interests in the Mediterranean and the Straights." In the same period Bismarck, after consultation with Vienna, advised Rome to aim its crosshairs on Albania, Libya and Tunisia while the Russian diplomat Alexander Mikhailovich Gorchakov (1798-1883) also encouraged Italian aspirations for Albania.⁴⁸ It was a unique and historic

⁴⁴ Photiades (Photiades Bay), chargé d'affaires of the Ottomans in Rome protested because, in the pact of 1868, Tunisia was mentioned as a Kingdom (Regno-Royanme) while it was known that it constituted a dominion, a vassal of the Sultan. The Italians countered by stating that the Ottoman rule was limited to religious issues and therefore the country was virtually independent. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. II, (Rome, 1966), p. 264.

⁴⁵ Italy was enjoying the status of the most-favoured state because of the preceding agreements between the Italian city-states and Tunisia, which were renewed by the unified Italian government after the unification as well. In 1816 and in 1832 the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont after an agreement extracted commercial privileges in Tunisia. With the treaty of 1856 between Austria and the Regency, Austrian-held Venice and Milan gained a series of facilitations and favourable trade arrangements within the scope of the Habsburg Empire. With a similar treaty, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany resolved the issue of the customs duties and settled its commercial relations with Tunisia, in 1822. The treaty in question was renewed on 2 November 1846. A similar treaty was concluded by the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies as well on 17 November 1833, while its example was followed by the Papal State and the duchies of Modena and Parma. See Archivio Centrale dello Stato (henceforth cited as A.C.S.), Carte Crispi /510, 1681, Puccioni to Crispi, 27 August 1895, without location.

⁴⁶ Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale*, pp. 10-11.

⁴⁷ In this period positive developments for Italy were also taking place in the Red Sea, where in 1870, it put it under its protection Assab, as will be more extensively presented in a following chapter.

⁴⁸ Jean Ganiage, "France, England, and the Tunisian affair", in *France and Britain in Africa: Imperial rivalry and colonial rule*, ed. P. Gifford, W. M. Roger Luis, (London, 1971), pp. 44-45. Every power

opportunity, as Italy was in the pleasant position, with the blessings of the European governments, of being able to choose its potential dominions, carve out an autonomous, dynamic policy and to become a Great Power. At that time, as if by tragic irony, the Depretis government fell. All the proposals came to nothing as the new Cairoli government zealously dedicated itself to the irredentist issue.

The standard demand to give up Trento and Trieste was a thorny issue in the relations between Rome and Vienna and consequently between Rome and Berlin, because of the German-Austrian alliance of 1879.⁴⁹ Italy was focusing on the concession of the irredent lands while Paris was seemingly aiming at regaining Lorraine and Alsace. But at the same time the French were promoting their expansion elsewhere too. Italy's activities and energy were directed mainly on Trieste and Trento, leaving France free to act, negotiate and finally obtain assurances from the European powers over control of Tunisia. The new Italian Foreign Minister, Corti, a man sceptical by nature, rejected all the proposals for moving into Africa, which "could perhaps lead to war," thus withdrawing Rome from the European understanding which would divide the plunders of the Ottoman Empire. The British and the Germans then turned to Paris, which now seemed to be in a position to assume its pre-1870 role.⁵⁰ In this manner, the diplomatic isolation of Rome came about with sad consequences during the proceedings of the Berlin Conference as well as during the final stages of the Tunisian issue. Berlin and Bismarck in particular, who was following his well-known cynical policy, and London which had seemingly long abandoned its traditional policy of maintaining the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, in order to have the occupation of Cyprus accepted and recognized, offered Tunisia to France.⁵¹ The Anglo-French approach was then extended to the issues of restructuring the Egyptian economy and maintaining the status quo in the Holy Land. The French Foreign Minister and later on President of the French Republic William Henry Waddington (1826-1894) realized the tremendous benefits of the Anglo-German backing and reserved the right to examine the Tunisian issue in due time.⁵² The shift of the European diplomatic climate clearly forebode the Italian defeat. Italy, because of the inconsistency of its external policy and of the unfortunate circumstances, not

suggested different regions to Italy's policy makers according to its particular interests. Austria proposed Libya in an attempt to prevent an Italian presence in the Balkans. The French even though had previously offered Libya, they would certainly be more content to see Italy away from Algiers and Tunis, in Albania or the Red Sea. Italy stubbornly rejected any offers counting on the recognition of its Tunisian interests.

⁴⁹ Chester Penn Higby, *History of Modern Europe. A Survey of the Evolution of European Society from the National Risings against Napoleon to the Present Day*, (London-New York, 1932), p. 257

⁵⁰ Ganiage, *France, England*, p. 45.

⁵¹ For Berlin it was completely immaterial which state would eventually occupy Tunisia. Its objective was to avoid at all costs a Franco-Italian understanding which would potentially harm the German interests in Europe. For this reason it was skilfully fomenting the Mediterranean antagonism. When a Franco-Russian alliance seemed to take shape, it approached Rome offering what it desired most, Tunisia. See Camussi, *Diritti Italiani nel mondo*, p. 87.

⁵² Ganiage, *France, England*, p. 48.

only lost the lead that had so painstakingly acquired in Tunisia but appeared to be losing out to a reborn France which additionally enjoyed the support of the rest of the governments.

When Tunisia "was being gifted" to Rome, during the Congress of Berlin, as a counterweight to the disturbance of the balance in the Mediterranean and Europe, Italy had refused the proposal. Since it did not occupy Tunisia when it had the momentum, it contented itself with strengthening its position and influence, evading a direct rift with Paris.⁵³ The only sensible choice that was now remaining to Rome was to maintain the status quo.⁵⁴ Besides, according to the French proclamations, there was no latent danger for Italy. The President of the French Republic François Paul Jules Grévy (1807-1891) declared: "The issue of Tunisia does not merit losing the valuable for us Italian friendship" and Waddington on the same wavelength stated: "France does not, nor will it ever contemplate the occupation of Tunisia [as it is] not willing to turn Italy into an enemy."⁵⁵ The latter comfortingly assured Rome that "we would never do anything in the Mediterranean without prior consultation with Italy."⁵⁶ The relaxed Italian government naively trusted the misleading French statements about maintaining the status quo in the Regency. The Italian consul in Paris, Enrico Cialdini (1811-1892) in 1878 accurately and prophetically said about the matter: "to trust is good but to not trust is better."⁵⁷

The idea of a dynamic resolution of the Tunisian stalemate began maturing in the minds of the French officials and decision makers. That is why after British encouragement, they "suggested" Libya, which will be mentioned further on, to Rome.⁵⁸ The British Foreign Minister, Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-Cecil, third Marquis of Salisbury (1830-1903) mentioned potential territorial concessions in Africa in the case of a French occupation of the Regency.⁵⁹ Cairoli, insistent on respecting the status quo, denied every proposal. The timidity, the fear of inducing French or Turkish reactions, the complacency brought about by the French officials, the inability to comprehend the diplomacy and the parameters of the New Imperialism, the policy of "clean hands", would cost Italy once again. The Italian public opinion was so profoundly disappointed by the outcome of the deliberations during the Congress of 1878 and afterwards, that the Cairoli government was shaken and on the verge of dissolution. Waiting and reorganizing seemed as the most appropriate tactic before the final clash for the control of Tunisia. Italy did not take any decisive action that would directly hurt its relationship with France, and preferred to wait for more favourable circumstances, implementing in the meanwhile a program

⁵³ Luigi Salvatorelli, *Sommario della storia d'Italia dai tempi preistorici ai nostri giorni*, (Turin, 1969), p. 474.

⁵⁴ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XI, (Rome, 1986), p. 196.

⁵⁵ Camussi, *Diritti Italiani nel mondo*, p. 86.

⁵⁶ Missiroli, *Da Tunisi*, p. 33.

⁵⁷ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 364.

⁵⁸ Camussi, *Diritti Italiani nel mondo*, p. 87.

⁵⁹ Ganiage, *France, England*, p. 49.

of methodical penetration. Having realized the weakness of the rival bloc the French consul in Rome, Emmanuel Henri Victurnien, Marquis de Noailles (1830-1909) abruptly changed direction and in October of 1878 declared to his Italian counterpart: "Italy cannot dream as far as the conquest of Tunisia is concerned without clashing and risking a conflict with France."⁶⁰ The hitherto moderate and friendly Waddington stated that the French government might not be thinking about the occupation of Tunisia but, if Italy was seeking to dominate there without prior agreement, France would be obliged to prevent it.⁶¹ The most experienced protagonists were operating in this cynical manner in the age of the frantic imperialism. The Quai d'Orsay boldly revealed its intentions and prompted Rome to turn its ambitions towards Libya. The French government now considered the Regency an area exclusively of its own interests, destined to become part of its African empire, enraging in this manner the Italians who for decades were being hopeful of making Tunisia their dominion.⁶² This was the diplomatic and psychological background of the two adversaries during the last and more dramatic phase of the Tunisian issue. The two sides might not have been level at that particular time but they were certainly equally determined to prevail.

After Deputy Giovanni Mussi's (1835-1887) short period in office Licurgo Macciò (1826-1905) took over as the new Italian consul. The new consul made a great impression when in September 1878 he landed on the Tunisian shores for the first time escorted by a marine contingent. Indeed Macciò from the onset of his consul's tenure proposed and pushed forward a series of Italian sponsored public works and enterprises such as the construction and extension of a telegraphic line by Rubattino despite French protests.⁶³ The landing of the new forceful Italian consul in Tunis accompanied by marines; the propaganda from both sides;⁶⁴ the respects that prominent Tunisians paid to the Italian royal family during the latter's tour in Sicily in January 1881;⁶⁵ the plans for the installation of a submarine cable that would facilitate the communication between Sicily and Tunisia, were the breeding-grounds for quarrels with the French.⁶⁶ Every occasion was deemed suitable by Macciò and his French counterpart Roustan to frequent the bey's court to protest, to flatter, to

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 54.

⁶¹ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XI, (Rome, 1986), p. 157.

⁶² Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. V, (Rome, 1979), pp. 595-596, 617.

⁶³ Marchitto, *L'Italia*, pp. 44-48.

⁶⁴ In the field of propaganda the Italians achieved marked success with the publication in Cagliari, Sardinia of the newspaper *Al-Mostakell* (Independence) in Arabic. See Miège, *L'Imperialismo coloniale Italiano*, p. 34.

⁶⁵ In the occasion of the Italian royal family's visit in Sicily the Minister of War, a royal member of the Tunisian dynasty and Macciò met with King Umberto I (1844-1900) amidst a cordial atmosphere. The consul speaking about the "provinces that were Rome's" in the past asserted to the king: the Italians in Tunisia are waiting with faith the day in which the prestige and the splendour of the nation abroad will be equal to its glorious traditions...". See Marchitto, *L'Italia*, p. 49.

⁶⁶ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XI, (Rome, 1986), p. 371. Macciò in February 1880 secured the bey's approval for the placement of an underwater cable between Tunisia and Sicily. The French fought and opposed the Italian plan, which would reinforce Rome's influence in Tunisia, in every way. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XIII, (Rome, 1991), pp. 110, 208.

threaten, to do everything possible to undermine a potential advantage of the other side.⁶⁷

The Italian government implemented a costly policy in the hope that it would ensure predominance in the country, since it considered that its political position there was not proportional to the moral and financial aid that it had offered. The spread of the Italian culture and language, the manufacture of telegraphs, the establishment of post offices and banks, the control of the shipping, the participation of immigrants in prominent economic activities, the intrusion in the fields of agriculture and commerce were considered legitimate means of dealing with the French peril.⁶⁸ Paris in turn, since it could not invade militarily, invaded administratively and financially acquiring mines, lands, railways and harassing any progress of the rival side.⁶⁹ The Italians apart from the French involvement also had to face the obstructionism or the lack of co-operation on the part of the bey. When they were considering that the Italian community was being treated unfairly or was being oppressed they were energetically asserting their interests "even with violence...demonstrating that we are among the Great Powers of Europe and forcing the bey to respect our rights."⁷⁰

In July 1877, before the sharp increase of the antagonism, the French discovered a foothold that in accordance with the rules of imperialism, if there were any, could give them the triggering event to intervene in Tunisia. In 1863 a French count, by the name of Deveaux Veillet de Sancy, purchased a concession of 1,000 hectares in Sidi Tabet in which he undertook the obligation to create farms and pasture estates.⁷¹ However, when the transfer was annulled by the Prime Minister Mustafa ben Ismail (1850-1887), since Sancy had failed to meet his commitments, the French consul considering the area in question as "French territory" drafted and dispatched a 48 hour ultimatum, which in the event of its rejection would give Paris the possibility of military action against the Regency.⁷² This threat to the relief of the Italians and much more of the Tunisians did not materialize.

In 1878, despite reassuring French proclamations, there were suspicions of an impending surprise attack by a contingent of the French fleet in the country. Italian undercover agents were sent to the Algerian ports and Toulon, from where the French

⁶⁷ Ricci, *La ferrovia Tunisi-La Goletta*, pp. 1051-1052.

⁶⁸ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. X, (Rome, 1976), pp. 403-404.

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 405-6. In addition the French were constructing a road from Tunis towards Bona and Bizerte, and were planning to buy out the railway line Tunis-Goletta, construct an isthmus at Gabes, establish a bank for the settlement of the Tunisian debt whereas at the same time they were financing the projects of lighting the capital with gas and of setting up a French college. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XI, (Rome, 1986), p. 322.

⁷⁰ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. II, (Rome, 1966), p. 77. Indeed, the Italian government often intervened in the Regency ostensibly to protect its countrymen and their investments. On one such occasion during the Arab uprising in Algeria and Tunisia in May 1871 a squadron of the Italian Navy was dispatched for protection and intimidation. See Ibid., p. 446.

⁷¹ Lorenzo Del Piano, *La penetrazione italiana in tunisia (1861-1881)*, (Padova, 1964), p. 142.

⁷² Ganiage, *France, England, and the Tunisian affair*, p. 55.

fleet would potentially cast off, to appraise the on-site operations and to report anything suspicious. The rumour might not have been confirmed but the Italian agents recommended to their government to strengthen the presence of the Italian fleet in the Tunisian territorial waters.⁷³ The Italians claimed they were seeking only to maintain Tunisia's freedom and to enforce order. They said were not harbouring ambitions against the country but if the necessity arose, they would dispatch their fleet to safeguard their interests.⁷⁴ On the contrary, Roustan in August 1878 laid the groundwork for the imposition of a protectorate while French diplomats were already considering the possibility of offering to Italy another territory for its activities. According to Waddington: "Italy is a very young nation to have precise objections. It's not a real policy but a tendency and secret aspirations drawn by reasons of Genovese and Venetian tradition...". In May 1880 Paris suggested yet another "alliance treaty" to the Tunisian government. Italy to counter these machinations approached London, Istanbul and Berlin "selling" its alliance to the higher bidder, to whoever could secure Tunisia for it.⁷⁵

The most important episode of the Franco-Italian antagonism was the issue of the Tunis-Goleta railway, owned by the British company Tunisian Railways. The British company, nominal proprietor of the line, facing economic hardships decided to concede its rights. In March 1880 the Italian company Rubattino initiated talks and reached an agreement with the British for the purchase of the line for a fee of 90,000 sterling (3,250,000 lire). While the final proceedings were taken care of, the English representative was suddenly notified to break off the negotiations and two days later the railway was sold to the French company Bona-Guelma. The Italian side naturally protested for this slight. The heated reaction of the Italian community and of Italian public opinion prompted the Cairoli government to support the Rubattino Company in a rivalry that was moving from the economic to the political sphere.⁷⁶ The matter was resolved at a London auction on 7 July 1880, where Rubattino, with the backing of the Italian government secured the line for 4,125,000 lire. The company completed the purchase of the railway in a climate of national pride and unbridled enthusiasm.⁷⁷ The parliament ratified the agreement on 13 July and a week later the Senate also gave its consent on the following grounds: this act "will mark a new step towards the future to which the traditions of the past (and) the civilizing mission imposed by our very geographical position are calling us". The furious French reaction proclaimed explicitly not only the discontent at the status quo in Tunisia, but also France's intentions to become the exclusive ruler of the country. The Foreign Minister Jules Barthélemy Saint Hilaire (1805-1895) in regard to the matter accused Rome of

⁷³ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. X, (Rome, 1976), pp. 527-534.

⁷⁴ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XIII, (Rome, 1991), pp. 633-636.

⁷⁵ Alberto Giocardi, *La Questione di Tunisi: storia diplomatica dal congresso di Berlino al trattato di Bardo*, (Milano, 1990), pp. 55-68, 119.

⁷⁶ Ricci, *La ferrovia Tunisi-La Goletta*, pp. 1052-1053. The efforts of Paris to acquire the railway and unite more closely Tunisia with Algeria, thus consolidating its position in North Africa, were characterized by the Italians as "national vanity" while the French were characterized as "avaricious". See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XIII, (Rome, 1991), pp. 168-170.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

"aggression"⁷⁸ whereas the Italian nationalists exulted: "Rome learnt the road to Carthage long before France even existed".⁷⁹

In April 1881 the French government found the pretext that it had been searching for. The Kroumirs, a nomadic Tunisian tribe skirmished with the Algerian provisional garrisons and crossed the borders in search of asylum.⁸⁰ The French, with a view to "enforcing order at their borders", dispatched a military force with "provisional" and "limited" objectives.⁸¹ Paris notified Rome that this expeditionary corps would withdraw immediately after the arrest of the defectors. However Ferry, who had previously declared that "we wish for neither the bey's territory nor his throne," gave the order to proceed with the occupation of the country's strategic locations until the "restoration of order is guaranteed". The French troops occupied Bizerte and Tunis, and imposed on Muhammad as-Sadiq Bey (1813-1882) the treaty of Bardo on 12 May 1881, which officially turned from then on the country into a French protectorate.⁸² It is rumoured that the occupation took place while two Italian war ships remained passive, docked at the port of Tunis.⁸³ Potential British objections were overcome as a result of Paris' reassurance to London that its commercial interests will stay intact and that it was not inclined to fortify Bizerte. In any case the "British hands" were tied.⁸⁴ The insurrection that broke out in the southern part of Tunisia gave the French the pretext to gradually conquer the entire Tunisian territory. On 8 June 1883 the agreement of Mousa completed the establishment of the French protectorate.⁸⁵ The diplomatically isolated Italian government was stunned by the barrage of developments and resigned on 13 May 1881 in a climate of crisis and national upheaval. All the efforts, the funds, the cultural penetration, the political struggles, the commitments, the successes, and the promises collapsed like a house of cards in the face of a single decisive French blow.

The attempt to carve out an active and expansive policy failed amid booing, fury and frustration. Rome acted as a Great Power, clashed on an equal footing with

⁷⁸ Ferry's predecessor, Prime Minister Charles Louis de Saulces de Freycinet (1828-1923) stated on the matter: "it is necessary for the Italian government, before going any further, to know that we consider Tunisia a natural extension of Algeria and we intend to practice an exclusive influence" and "Tunisia is and must remain a French land. We are ready to facilitate their (Italian) aims in other places of the Mediterranean coast but they have to entirely renounce this territory". The maintenance of the status quo was already intolerable for Paris. See Francesco Cataluccio, *Italia e Francia in Tunisia (1878-1939)*, (Rome, 1939), pp. 21-22.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 23-25.

⁸⁰ Missiroli, *Da Tunisi*, p. 30.

⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 30-31. Even the French newspaper *La Gazette de France* admitted that the Kroumirs incident was nothing but a pretext to invade Tunisia. See "Stampa Estera", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 107, Wednesday, 11 May 1881, p. 1.

⁸² Giuliano Procacci, *Storia degli Italiani*, (Rome-Bari, 1993), p. 423.

⁸³ Giocardi, *La Questione*, p. 316.

⁸⁴ Harold Temperley, Lilian M. Penson, *Foundations of British foreign policy (1792-1902) from Pitt (1792) to Salisbury (1902) or documents, old and new selected and edited, with historical introductions*, (Cambridge, 1938), pp. 413-414.

⁸⁵ Cataluccio, *Italia e Francia*, pp. 30-31.

Paris, and seemed, albeit belatedly, to understand the rules of the game. In the end, however, they failed to obtain any practical benefit. On the contrary, the hitherto privileged position of the Italians in Tunisia deteriorated and their rights were checked after the imposition of the French protectorate.⁸⁶ The French moved to degrade the Italian advantages, starting with the annulment of the 1868 Italo-Tunisian treaty. Its second move was the May 5 1883 degree according to which every foreign resident was obliged to make use of the French law courts. In 15 September 1885 the Italian collective interests were further harmed as a result of another French inspired piece of legislation. This time the liberty of association was limited and the Italian educational institutions and missionary activities passed into the protectorate government's jurisdiction.⁸⁷ With the 4th article of the Bardo treaty the French were obliged to respect the previous agreements between the bey and the European states. Despite these promises French administration opposed and restrained Italian activity and a series of ordinances hindered the Italian associations and educational institutes.⁸⁸ Crispi, reported the violation of the 1868 Italo-Tunisian act, through the Italian embassies in Europe on 15 September 1888, and he even threatened to impose the same kind of restrictions on every French institution in Rome as retaliation. On 17 August 1895 Paris unilaterally abolished the 1868 Italo-Tunisian act. The new legal system put forth by Paris regulating the new position and rights of the Italian community was amended by the 28 September 1896 Tornielli-Honotaux convention. The Italian government had to give up the post offices and railways previously acquired in Tunisia and recognize the French rule in exchange for the retention of some of its former privileges.⁸⁹ The disagreements between France and Italy were partially settled with a bilateral treaty in September 1896 that proved remarkably durable, although frictions over Tunisia continued until the Fascist period.⁹⁰

Despite the imposition of the protectorate Italian commercial activities were still flourishing: In 1884 and 1885 the number of Italian merchant ships in Tunisian ports was 1456 and 2177 in comparison to 833 and 943 respectively under the French flag. Furthermore, the immigration flow from Sicily continued at an even larger scale

⁸⁶ After the abolition of the Italian privileges the government turned to Britain for backing and mediation. See A.C.S., Carte Crispi /510, 1662, Ferrero to Blanc, 21 August 1895, London.

⁸⁷ Marchitto, *L'Italia*, pp. 73-75.

⁸⁸ Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 1 série (1871-1900), tome VII, 1 January, 1888-19 March 1890, (Paris, 1937), pp. 298-299.

⁸⁹ Marchitto, *L'Italia*, p. 76. The 1896 treaty recognized the Italian citizenship and institutions and granted to Italy the status of the most-favoured-state in trade. Italy recognized France's possession of the Regency of Tunisia and France in exchange guaranteed the protection of the Italian schools in Tunis, Bizerte, Goleta, Sfax, and Susa. Italian schools in Tunisia, and elsewhere in the Mediterranean, were centrally administered by the Italian state and were very expensive. In 1901, nine-tenths of Italy's budget for schools abroad went to state schools in Tunisia, Tripolitania, Egypt, Greece, and Albania. See Mark I. Choate, "Identity Politics and Political Perception in the European Settlement of Tunisia: The French Colony versus the Italian Colony", in *French Colonial History*, 8 (2007), p. 100-101.

⁹⁰ Egidio Moleti di S. Andrea, *Dallo Stretto di Gibilterra al canale di Suez. L'Italia e gli altri nel Mediterraneo e nei possedimenti coloniali d'Africa*, (Lecco, 1928), p. 74.

and in 1891 it numbered 40,000 immigrants.⁹¹ French rule meant a mutually beneficial peace and a vast program of public works and investments in favour of the industrious Italian community such as the defensive works in Bizerte, the extension of the railways and the 1887-1893 minesweeping operations. The technical expertise and labour work of the Italians were valuable for the development of Tunisia and made the most of the French capitals.⁹² Putting in practice their colonial policy the French enacted a program of assimilating the natives and the Italian community alike. As part of the assimilation process Paris even employed the Catholic Church, which had great influence upon the uneducated working masses. The French did manage to monopolize the religious institutions in Tunisia, as the Vatican ordered the Italian missionaries in Tunisia to be replaced by their French counterparts, following France's declaration of the protectorate. Thus the French through their active clergy in Tunisia and Algeria sought to assimilate the Italians and Spaniards in a respectful manner and to bring them closer to the French authority under the auspices of the pope.⁹³ The scheme to substitute the Italian religious element with the French one in the Catholic churches of Tunisia was put forth in collaboration with the Vatican, which was always willing to support France diplomatically against the usurper Italian government.⁹⁴

The popular rage after the Tunisian fiasco translated into riots and anti-French demonstrations in all the major cities of Italy while anti-Italian incidents occurred in Marseilles as well on 17-18 June 1881. France had not deprived Italy of just a dominion, but of a region so crucial for the Italian interests that many believed that the country would never be able to recover, to find a place in the sun, between the powerful nations of the world. Paris was no longer considered an obstacle, but a danger to Italian security. This fear and anxiety was the spark for consequences of the greatest importance. What the frustrated crowd was not in a position to know was that the largest share of the blame belonged to the Italian government, which made a series of diplomatic blunders, and that Tunisia's annexation to France was almost a foregone decision, as has been seen, since the Congress of Berlin.⁹⁵

The psychological blow of 1881 was the catalyst that prompted Rome to the camp of the Central Empires. Initially, Depretis did not consider the alliance with these Powers self-evident. Italy could not break off all diplomatic relations with France since 400,000 Italian immigrants were residing there and another 50,000 in

⁹¹ Cataluccio, *Italia e Francia*, pp. 42-43.

⁹² Marchitto, *L'Italia*, pp. 56-58.

⁹³ Giocardi, *La Questione*, pp. 210-211.

⁹⁴ Marilotti, *La Tunisia*, pp. 91-92. A L'Osservatore Romano's journalist mocked the liberal press and the Foreign Minister Venosta for their fierce verbal attacks on the French policy of violating even the borders of a "barbarian state". Through his column he reminded to his readers that by implementing similar treacherous scams a few years ago the same Italian governments had abolished and trample the Papal state's boundaries. See "Bollettino politico", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 109, Friday 13 May 1881, p. 1.

⁹⁵ Rinaldo Petrigani, *Neutralità e Alleanza, le scelte di politica estera dell'Italia dopo l'Unità*, (Bologna, 1987), pp. 259-261.

Tunisia. Thus Mancini, desiring to maintain some avenues of communication with Paris open, proposed the conclusion of a trade agreement which was ratified in November of 1881. Sidney Salome Costantino Sonnino (1847-1922), a successful economist and a charismatic statesman who served the Italian government in many positions until the end of the First World War,⁹⁶ believed that there was no time for vacillation and that "Italy had to decide if it wanted to be worth something in Europe."⁹⁷ It is certain that regardless of which side the Italians tended to align themselves with, the other one would be displeased. Ultimately, the whole of the political world, the deputies, but also the Dynasty came out in favour of approaching Berlin and Vienna.

As the Italian-French relations constantly deteriorated amidst the struggle for Tunisia, Rome proposed to Vienna in January 1881 a mutual neutrality treaty, with an obvious anti French basis.⁹⁸ Vienna and Berlin felt no pressure to be bound by such a treaty since the talks for the renewal of the Three Emperors Alliance, a more substantial pact, were well underway. In June 1881, nine years after the signing of the first treaty, the new alliance of the Three Emperors between Germany, Austria and Russia was concluded. However, during the first months of 1882 the latent Austro-Russian antagonism in the Balkans came to the surface. The perpetual flaw in Bismarck's system reappeared. When a rebellion broke out in Herzegovina and southern Dalmatia at the beginning of 1882, the Austrians, alarmed by the proclamations of Pan-Slavism,⁹⁹ suspected Russian involvement. On the opposite end Saint Petersburg never forgave Vienna for the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878 and had participated in the new alliance only to avoid diplomatic isolation.¹⁰⁰

The antagonism in the Balkans and the cracks that it was causing to Bismarck's edifice was Rome's ticket in the alliance. So, on 20 May 1882 the Triple Alliance (Triplice Alleanza) between Berlin, Vienna and Rome, with a five year duration, was signed.¹⁰¹ This defence pact had an anti-French nature since with it, the

⁹⁶ Aggeliki Sfika-Theodossiou, *Italy in the First World War. Its relations with the Great Powers and Greece*, (Athens, 2004), p. 38.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 275-278.

⁹⁸ Di Robilant the then Italian ambassador in Vienna exactly a year after the first Italian proposal declared that Italy was ready to approach the two central empires "to consolidate the (Italian) throne". See Erusalimskij Samsonovic, *Bismarck: Diplomazia e Militarismo*, p. 184.

⁹⁹ Pan-Slavism is the movement which set the target of unifying all the Slavic nations into a single state, a vision which started crystallizing in the middle of the 19th century, in the minds of the Poles, the Russians, the Czechs and the Bulgarians. See E.M. Burns, *European history, the western culture: Modern Times*, trans. T. Darveris, (Thessaloniki, 2006), p. 620.

¹⁰⁰ Serge Bernstein-Pierre Milza, *History of Europe. The European agreement and the Europe of nations 1815-1919*, trans. Anastasios K. Dimitrakopoulos, (Paris, 1992), pp. 158-161.

¹⁰¹ To some historians Italy after the Tunisian fiasco still had some margin to maneuver diplomatically and to approach other powers such as Britain. Bismarck by orchestrating skillfully the Tunisian crisis and by reviving the Roman question, or by threatening to do so, managed to pull Italy in a seemingly unnatural alliance with its worst enemy, Austria-Hungary. Under this light the triple alliance can be seen as a counterweight, a byproduct of the ruptured Three Emperors alliance. See Domenico Di Rubba, *Bismarck e la questione romana nella formazione della Triplice*, (Capua, 1917), pp. 28-29.

complete isolation of Paris was accomplished. Paris could not approach Russia because of its association with the Central Empires, nor Britain because of their colonial antagonism. Furthermore, it provided that if Italy was attacked by France the two other allies would rush to its support (*casus foederis*), whereas if Berlin came under French attack Rome respectively was obliged to provide military assistance.¹⁰² In the eventuality of an Austro-Russian war Italy was obliged to remain neutral. After a special clarification by the Italian side the alliance would not be directed against Britain.¹⁰³ The treaty proclaimed the solidarity of the three governments involved for the preservation of peace and it offered Rome the coveted security it was seeking in that turbulent period. Italy, directly or indirectly, was securing its territorial integrity: assistance in the event of a war with hostile France, moral support for the always topical problem of the Vatican and a truce with Vienna for the irredentist issue.¹⁰⁴ Naturally Germany and Austria-Hungary could not care less about Italy's aspirations in Tunisia and its interests in the Mediterranean in general; their representatives declared that the treaty was to sustain the "monarchic principal" the "social and political order" and "universal peace".¹⁰⁵

To Bismarck the Italian governments were unable to strengthen the monarchic principle and had an unstable foreign policy. Furthermore, the Italian military contribution and capabilities were at best dubious. What was indeed valuable to Berlin was Italy's neutrality in an eventual Austro-Russian conflict, its geopolitical significance and the fact that could attract Britain to the Central Empires camp.¹⁰⁶ The disadvantages of Italy's new diplomatic position were not, of course, negligible. Firstly it had to abandon, at least temporarily, the issue of the Italian regions under Habsburg control, a fact which was perceived as treason and caused strong discontent among Catholics, the Left, but mainly among the Italian right-wing. In spite of the alliance, the frictions for the irredentist zones and the primacy in Albania did not fade.¹⁰⁷ Germany's and Austria's adherence to the conservative monarchic values formed a hurdle in their relations with Italy. The "radical leftist Italy" was the reason for which Berlin was distrusting and avoiding a full co-operation with the Italian government.¹⁰⁸ Also, there was no mention of protecting the Italian interests in the Mediterranean and Africa in the agreement with the Central Empires, a fact that demonstrates Rome's anxiety and rush to conclude a treaty at any cost as long as it would avoid another slap from France. Indeed, during the last stages of the Tunisian

¹⁰² Berstein-Milza, *History of Europe*, p. 159.

¹⁰³ Procacci, *Storia degli Italiani*, pp. 422-423.

¹⁰⁴ Petrignani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, pp. 323-324.

¹⁰⁵ Erusalimskij Samsonovic, *Diplomazia e Militarismo*, p. 184

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 181.

¹⁰⁷ Petrignani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, p. 277.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 419. The chaotic difference between the oriented towards the autocratic ideals Germany and the liberal, with a transparent foreign policy, Italy was an impenetrable barrier to bilateral relations. The Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary said in 1884: "The reason for which the value of the Italian importance was gradually declining was the democratic development", i.e. Italy distancing itself from the monarchic ideals.

issue but as well as afterwards, a French attack against the Italian frontier was rumoured to be likely.¹⁰⁹ Paris, for its part, did nothing to reassure the Italian concerns. Instead, it began to fortify the strategic port of Bizerte in Tunisia, confirming and strengthening the Italian and British concerns.¹¹⁰

Finally, the limitations and the difference of strength between Germany and Italy meant that the latter was no longer allowed to pursue an independent foreign policy, a policy that, judging by its results, had not been particularly successful. Yet the Triple Alliance strengthened Italy's international position in a period of economic protectionism, political antagonism and general mistrust. Rome, attached to the German bandwagon, may have paid the price of its participation in the Alliance however, it had won its security in Europe, a fact which would allow it to embark, dedicated and without distractions, upon a policy of expansion in Africa.

The window of opportunity in the Mediterranean basin was closing. Algeria and Tunisia were converted into French dominions and Egypt, as will be seen further on, would suffer the British invasion. Morocco and Libya, which is neighbouring to Sicily, were being viewed as as potential dominions and were considered by the Europeans as "free" despite the nominal Ottoman suzerainty. The Italians turned their ambitions towards the latter, believing that they too, like the rest of the Powers, were entitled to expansion and to civilizing work. This time they had to act cynically, dynamically and instantly since there were suspicions that sooner or later Libya as well would become a French target.¹¹¹ Tunisia never constituted an Italian colony whereas Libya became one only in 1911. The fact that they were not placed under Italian rule the period under examination does not mean that these cases should not be considered. On the contrary, by considering the ambitions, the processes and the way in which the government of Rome handled each case, well-grounded conclusions can be drawn and the goal of interpreting the phenomenon of the Italian colonialism can be approached more safely.

The name Libya used above was not the one utilized by the Europeans of the 19th century. The word "Tripolitania" was used to describe the western part of today's

¹⁰⁹ In December 1882 the French mobility forebode the outbreak of yet another European war. French troops were placed on alert at the borders with their number increasing dramatically. Rumours leaked about a possible shelling of La Spezia naval base, on the coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea. According to the Italian view the French were acting once more "aggressively" as they did in Tonkin, in Madagascar, in Congo, in Tunisia and possibly in Libya. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XV-XVI, (Rome, 1993), p. 372. The risk of a war declaration was hanging as a Sword of Damocles over Italy throughout this tumultuous period. In 1887 the Italian diplomats once again mentioned a possible Italo-French conflict. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXI, (Rome, 1968), p. 385.

¹¹⁰ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXIV, (Rome, 1996), p. 573 and Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XX, (Rome, 1998), p. 240.

¹¹¹ Rumours about the designs and machinations of the French in Libya were putting the Italian authorities on alarm. According to news reports, on 15 October 1887 Paris persuaded with threats the Sultan to concede parts of the country's western zone which would be incorporated into the French Tunisia. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXI, (Rome, 1968), pp. 190-191.

Libya, which also includes the capital Tripoli. Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fezzan formed a dominion under the suzerainty of the Sultan and were perhaps the only zone of North Africa for which the European powers had not yet expressed any interest. The Ottomans occupied Cyrenaica in 1517 and Tripolitania in 1551, while the southern part of the country, isolated and arid because of the Sahara, remained virtually inaccessible.¹¹² The Ottoman rule was limited to the coastal areas and large cities, and its sole purpose was collecting taxes. The country's administration was delegated to local lords under the supervision of a governor (pasha).¹¹³ The entire country was named "Vilayet of Tripolitania" and that is why the term Tripolitania came to describe with the passing of the centuries all three Libyan provinces. The economically insignificant and rebellious Ottoman province suddenly acquired strategic importance after the French occupation of Algeria. So the High Porte, preempting the Europeans, organized three campaigns after 1835 to fully subjugate the troubled region, an objective that was achieved after twenty four years of clashes.¹¹⁴ The area was well known and constituted a field of antagonism between the Greeks, the Egyptians and the Romans since antiquity.¹¹⁵ In the middle of the 19th century it was inhabited by rugged nomadic tribes over whom Istanbul exercised sovereignty only in name.

Because of the climate's similarity with that of Sicily many Italians immigrated to Tripolitania too.¹¹⁶ Many of the Italian community in Tunisia, now under French control, decided to cross the frontier and resume farming, where "millions of hectares of uncultivated land were waiting for the care of our persistent farmers". According to others the province more resembled with a large sandbox (scatolone di sabbia).¹¹⁷ The country was not exactly the most irresistible attraction, a fact that was attested to by the small number of European residents and from the minimal capital that had been invested there.¹¹⁸ Yet Rome put in place a policy of influence and economic penetration in the region, since as "free", still unaffected by European designs, it was there for the taking.

Italy could not remain indifferent to any attempt by another Power to capture Cyrenaica or Tripolitania, since it was asserting "legitimate rights" there.¹¹⁹ Its

¹¹² Dirk Vandewalle, *A history of modern Libya*, (New York, 2006), p. 16.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 16.

¹¹⁴ Psiroukis, *Colonialism, the Culmination*, p. 258.

¹¹⁵ Today's Libya also constituted, in ancient times, part of the Roman Empire, a fact of crucial importance for the expansionist aspirations of the 19th century Italian imperialists that should not be neglected. See Giacomo De Martino, *Tripoli, Cirene e Cartagine*, (Bologna, 1907), p. 7.

¹¹⁶ Moleti di S. Andrea, *Dallo Stretto di Gibilterra al canale di Suez*, p. 97.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 103.

¹¹⁸ Nicola Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione coloniale italiana*, (Bologna, 2002), p. 47. A minimum number of exploratory missions headed to Libya, revealing the universal indifference of the Europeans for the country. The most famous exploratory mission, was that of the German Nachtigal (Gustav Nachtigal 1834-1885) in 1869 and from the Italian side that of Manfredo Camperio, two millennia after the first description by Herodotus. See Vandewalle, *modern Libya*, p. 12.

¹¹⁹ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XV-XVI, (Rome, 1993), p. 480.

importance for Rome is revealed by the frequent exploratory missions, starting from January 1881, which were organized to study its commercial and agricultural potential with the Sultan's knowledge.¹²⁰ In 1882 Italy had lost the opportunity to consolidate its dominance over the Mediterranean and thus public opinion and the parliament began to demand the colonization of any dominion, an event that would restore the international standing of the country.¹²¹ So matured the "predisposition", the thought that Rome, in the framework of its policy about Libya, ought to act instantaneously in the first favourable occasion to avoid yet another unpleasant surprise.¹²² If this area was also placed under foreign control, the financial and strategic position of Italy would receive an irreparable blow, from which it might never be able to recover.¹²³ There were no longer any margins for hesitations, mistaken calculations and clumsy moves.

In autumn 1884 the Italian General Staff drew up, with absolute secrecy, plans about landing and occupying Tripolitania.¹²⁴ When the Triple Alliance was renewed on 20 February 1887 and on 6 May 1891, Italy, still attached to the German bandwagon and having partially overcome its francophobia, requested favourable clauses for itself or at least more favourable than those of 1882.¹²⁵ This development is explained by the improvement of its international position in the meantime.¹²⁶ Foreign Minister Carlo Felice Nicolis Count di Robilant (1826-1888) demanded exchanges in the event of a potential change of the Balkan status quo, thus reopening the issue of Trieste and Trento open.¹²⁷ To avoid an Italo-French understanding, Bismarck and the Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary Gustáv Zsigmund Count Kálnoky (1832-1898) accepted the Italian proposals for the Mediterranean basin too. Berlin and Vienna reluctantly agreed to protect Italian interests even with the use of arms in the case of a new French challenge. Italy was

¹²⁰ Ibid., pp. 255-256.

¹²¹ Renzo de Felice, *Storia dell'Italia Contemporanea Stato e Società*, vol. 1, (Naples, 1976), p. 224.

¹²² Ibid., p. 224.

¹²³ The case of Tripolitania "has nothing to do with megalomania but the need, political as well as economical, of a real, biological law that imposes on the maritime states colonial expansion and in the opposite case decline." See Alberto Aquarone, *Dopo Adua: politica e amministrazione coloniale*, (Rome, 1989), p. 372.

¹²⁴ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 19.

¹²⁵ Francesco Barbagallo, "Da Crispi a Giolitti. lo Stato, la politica, i conflitti sociali" in *Storia d'Italia, Liberalismo e Democrazia 1887-1914*, ed. G. Sabbatucci, V. Vidotto, (Bari, 1995), p. 27.

¹²⁶ One of the reasons that enhanced the value of the Italian alliance was the fierce rivalry between Austria and Russia for influence in Bulgaria in 1886-1887. The possibility of Russia seceding from the alliance made Italian co-operation more valuable for Berlin. See Bernstein-Milza, *History of Europe*, p. 160. When peace in Europe seemed secured Italy's value was minimal, when it was under threat from a crisis, the position of Rome, was being elevated as if by miracle.

¹²⁷ In October 1885 di Robilant ascended to the Foreign Minister position and made clear that Italy would not renew and participate in the Triple Alliance if its interests were to remain unprotected. In order to increase Italy's value in the eyes of the Central Empires di Robilant approached London and Paris proposing to the latter a treaty of navigation on 30 April 1886 which was ultimately rejected. Mutual relations sank once more see Fuller Joseph Vincent, *Bismarck's diplomacy at its zenith*, (London, 1922), pp. 65-67.

now enjoying the security that was necessary for its internal reorganization, although its military obligations arising from the Alliance were burdening the state budget far too much.¹²⁸ Rome, having no other choice, and fearing that Tripolitania would meet the fate of Tunisia, approached Austria-Hungary, Britain and Spain aiming to maintain the status quo in the Mediterranean.¹²⁹ Salisbury stated that "the day that the status quo is altered in the Mediterranean [is the day that] it is necessary for Tripolitania to be captured by Italy." To ensure its future consolidation Rome in June 1898 approached even its great opponent, Paris, offering support in Morocco in exchange for freedom of action in Libya.¹³⁰ Besides, the French had initially "offered" the Ottoman province to Italy, trying to restore bilateral relations.¹³¹ In this way Italy, despite the Porte's irritation, slowly but steadily formulated a policy of economic penetration in Libya, a policy that would pave the way for its future occupation. Tripolitania, three times the size of Italy, became a constant and fixed ambition, which additionally would offer, as it was believed, political balance in the Mediterranean, a balance that was disrupted in favour of France and against Italy with the treaty of Bardo.¹³²

The Italians claimed that they desired only the preservation of the balance and the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, as it had been agreed upon in 1856.¹³³ If the Porte relinquished territories or privileges in the region to any other Power, Italy was "obliged to act".¹³⁴ Thus the enormous importance for Rome of this vital area becomes clear. In 1885 "few are those now in Italy who do not recognize the need to make Tripolitania our own."¹³⁵ The Italians, by utilizing their hitherto African experience, began to address the issue with vigour and suspicion. When in September 1885 armed clashes broke out between two nomadic tribes on the borders of Tunisia-Tripolitania, the Italians, anticipating the French might use this as an opportunity, rushed to support and expand their co-operation with the pasha of the country as well as the Sultan, acting as a counterweight to the French threat.¹³⁶ With the memories of the 1881 setback still fresh, Rome knew in advance that Paris, with the pretence of

¹²⁸ Berstein-Milza, *History of Europe*, pp. 24-27.

¹²⁹ Missiroli, *Da Tunisi*, p. 38.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-41.

¹³¹ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 373.

¹³² Giovanni Bosco Naitza, *Il Colonialismo nella storia d'Italia (1882-1949)*, (Florence, 1975), p. 12.

¹³³ During the proceedings of the congress in Paris in March 1856, after the end of the Crimean War, all the Great Powers and Italy, as the then Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont, agreed to respect the independence and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. This commitment, which all the Powers violated sooner or later, would preserve the peace in Europe. See Tullio Scovazzi, *Assab, Massaua, Ucciali, Adua, gli strumenti giuridici del primo colonialismo italiano*, (Turin, 1996), p. 65.

¹³⁴ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XX, (Rome, 1998), p. 81.

¹³⁵ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 374.

¹³⁶ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XX, (Rome, 1998), p. 108. In the same year the Italians had their attention turned to the Red Sea as well, where they had consolidated themselves at Massawa with uncontrollable consequences, as will be seen further on.

ensuring order, would send a military force from neighbouring Tunisia.¹³⁷ After so many crises of francophobia and disappointments the Italians understood the methods, the tactics that they had to adopt to turn from stooges to protagonists in the colonial adventure. Each incorrect handling, each setback, each defeat was a painful lesson, the teachings of which they had to implement in other African regions. In regard to Tripolitania, however, they did not manage to gain a "dominant influence" and so in 1884, like in 1878, they remained "with clean hands".¹³⁸ Because of indecision, the unprepared Italian army and the economic difficulties, the Italian government delayed taking action in Libya until 1911.

The turbulent two-year period of 1881-1882 when the Egyptian crisis broke out shall now be examined. Egypt, because of inconsistent fiscal policy, stratospheric expenditures during the campaigns in Sudan and unjustifiable expenses on behalf of the khedive,¹³⁹ found itself at the end of the 19th century in a deplorable financial state. The British and the French, anticipating the golden opportunity to subjugate the country and primarily to control more directly the Suez Canal, agreed to oversee the state finances themselves. Italy attempted to join this control regime which had developed into a protectorate, in 1878 and 1879, seeking to safeguard its own interests there, but the French reaction ruled this out.¹⁴⁰ Because of the stifling European suzerainty, in the summer of 1882 a national liberation movement broke out, with the military officer Orabi Pasha as the prime mover.¹⁴¹

As the danger of military intervention increased, the faltering nature of the Mediterranean balance was becoming visible. Rome argued that the problem ought to be resolved by the internal mechanisms of the Ottoman Empire. The interests and lives of the Italian community in Egypt, that numbered approximately 14,000 persons consisting the second biggest European community in the country after the Greeks, had to be protected.¹⁴² Mancini, who wanted to avoid unilateral military action, approached his German and Austrian allies to find a mutually acceptable and moderate solution. The indifference of the latter two towards the Egyptian crisis became evident during the proceedings of the international conference in Istanbul, which was convened precisely to resolve this problem.¹⁴³ The British Prime Minister

¹³⁷ The Italians, when the rumours about a French attack in Libya intensified, had already imagined the French arguments: "You Turks are not able to guarantee the safety of Tunisia from your position in Tripolitania." In this way the occupation of the region would not have brought about the total rupture with the Porte since the French would, justifiably, be defending, their legitimate rights and the Mediterranean security. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XIV, Rome 1991, p. 684.

¹³⁸ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 402.

¹³⁹ The role of the khedive in Egypt was essentially that of a regent, the governor of the country in the name of the Sultan to whom he was subject.

¹⁴⁰ Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale*, p. 50.

¹⁴¹ Petignani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, pp. 352-6.

¹⁴² Giampaolo Calchi Novati, *Fra Mediterraneo e Mar Rosso. Momenti di politica italiana in Africa attraverso il colonialismo*, (Rome, 1992), p. 33.

¹⁴³ The conference was held in June 1882, after an Italian proposition and had the stated aim of finding a golden mean with regard to the Egyptian revolution. The conference launched an appeal to the Sultan

William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898), encouraged by German support, declined every French proposal of co-operation and decided to act unilaterally. So, on 11 July 1882 the British fleet shelled Alexandria revealing London's determination to become the sole ruler not only of the canal but of the whole country. The British late proposal for co-operation to Paris was rejected and the perplexed French government ordered the withdrawal of its warships from the Egyptian territorial waters, at a time when the Sultan suddenly found himself before a *fait accompli*.¹⁴⁴

On 26 July the British Foreign Minister, Granville delivered to the Italian consul in London an invitation to act jointly and to enforce order in Egypt. Foreign Minister Mancini declined, arguing that since the Sultan had pledged to send troops for the pacification of the region, Italy had no reason to intervene, upsetting the European balance.¹⁴⁵ The opportunity of gaining a foothold in a zone of crucial importance in the Mediterranean was lost again. Much ink has been spilled for the reasons of Mancini's refusal. It is believed that it would be unwise for Rome to devote itself in a campaign of this kind at a time when elections and the reconfiguration of the old electoral system were pending. In addition, the Italian Foreign Minister hesitated perhaps to assume the initiative without the consent of the Triple Alliance members, whose stated position was defensive and conservative, supporting the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁴⁶ Of course, Bismarck had previously backed the British and French ambitions in Egypt behind-the-scenes. The uncertain outcome of the military operations, the French distress, the lack of means, the military expenditures and the inability of the Italian army to operate so far away from its base weighed in on Mancini's decision.¹⁴⁷ The easy victory that the British achieved and the subsequent occupation of Egypt proved that the danger and the risk of the intervention had been overestimated by Mancini, who, with his unwise action condemned Italy to a disadvantageous and problematic position in the Mediterranean. The former Minister of Agriculture and Finance, Marco Minghetti (1818-1886) declared in October 1882: "I would have liked [to see] the Italian flag wave next to the British on the Egyptian coast", while Crispi stated that: "Austria from the Alps to the Aegean is blocking our path and in the Mediterranean, Britain and France are smothering us."¹⁴⁸ The same statesman claimed that the New Italy lacked courage a quality that the small Piedmont had more than enough.¹⁴⁹

to dispatch troops for the cessation of hostilities and all its members agreed not to obtain territorial gains from that fluid situation. See Psiroukis, *History of Colonialism, the Culmination*, vol. 3, p. 222.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 223.

¹⁴⁵ Carlo Giglio, *L'Impresa di Massaua*, (Rome, 1955), p. 13.

¹⁴⁶ Petrigani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, pp. 357-360.

¹⁴⁷ Miège, *L'Imperialismo coloniale Italiano*, p. 38.

¹⁴⁸ Petrigani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, pp. 359-360.

¹⁴⁹ Cavour dragged Piedmont into the Crimean War (1853-6) against Russia aiming only to the establishment of a positive climate and to the diplomatic support of the British and French on the issue of the Italian Unification. So perhaps Mancini would have also served the Italian interests better if he had acted jointly with Britain in Egypt with an eye to future co-operation and support on other fronts.

When Mancini's colleagues realized that the campaign did not pose grave dangers and complications, the atmosphere became charged with tension with a multitude of verbal attacks against him. He defended his positions by arguing that he rejected the British proposal on the basis of "respecting the rights of the other states", and because of "international law".¹⁵⁰ As a scholar and a thinker of the international law he placed special importance to the ideals of independence and the principles of justice and morality. On 22 May 1884 he stated to the parliament: "I can say without hesitation that, as a Minister and as a Deputy I shall always consider unwise and harmful the advice to incite Italy, a young nation, that above all else is in need of security, of peace, of fruitful activity, of internal stabilisation and of developing its means of prosperity and strength, to throw itself into a costly and dangerous adventures in areas far away, to initiate what it is customary to be called a colonial policy."¹⁵¹ The same person, in an oxymoronic manner, would later be a prime colonial mover, linking his name with a policy of informal or indirect imperialism.¹⁵² As will be seen in the next chapter, his actions were of catalytic significance for Italy's expansion to the Red Sea and the acquisition of its first colony. The name of the "humanitarian" Mancini is today interwoven with one of the most resounding contradictions of the modern Italian history.

Germany was safe and powerful, maintaining friendly relations with London, having secured the alliance of Russia and Austria and flirting occasionally with France. That is why the Italian alliance took on even less importance, which explains the absence of any form of co-operation between the allies during the Moroccan crisis of 1884. At that time, once again on the occasion of the actions of some rebellious nomadic tribes, Paris demanded the readjustment of the Algerian-Moroccan borders. The Italians, suspicious and alarmed by the developments, considered the French request a pretext for annexing Morocco as well. Berlin was indifferent about the matter disappointing the Italians and unwilling to engage in quarrels with Paris "because of vague concerns apropos of the Italian interests...in Morocco, in the Red Sea, in Tunisia or in Egypt". The relations of the Triple Alliance members had reached their nadir.¹⁵³

Morocco, an independent state in the form of sultanate, was one of the few parts of African land that had yet to be placed under foreign guardianship. Morocco like Tunisia was constantly under threat by its own lack of effective government and by the French forces on its Algerian borders. The position of the Europeans in Morocco was settled by the agreement of 1880, a result of the Madrid conference,¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁰ Ottavio Barri , "Italian Imperialism: the first stage", in *the Journal of Italian History*, 2/3 (1979), p. 547.

¹⁵¹ Giglio, *L'impresa di Massaua*, p. 15.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁵³ Pettrignani, *Neutralit  e Alleanza*, pp. 369-371.

¹⁵⁴ The Madrid conference took place in July 1880 in order to discuss the eventuality of reforming Morocco's institutions and to adjudicate the European Powers' pretensions. Morocco as a corrupted and backward state was in need of an efficient army, economic development and administrative reforms.

which was ensuring the economic interests of fourteen states in the country.¹⁵⁵ The Italian investors had their share of interests too, such as an arms factory in Fès, while settlers and funds were progressively pouring in the country.¹⁵⁶ The Sultan of Morocco reassured that the Italians, unlike the French, did not nourish expansionist designs against his territory fully co-operated with the envoys of Rome at any given time.¹⁵⁷ Nevertheless, Italy's stance in Morocco was inconsistent. The Italian consul Scovasso supported the idea of the state's reformation as a mean to oppose the French expansion and influence there. In 1878 though, he sided with the French, an act of rapprochement as other fronts were notably more crucial for the Italian interests. As a result during the Madrid conference two opposite fronts took shape: the British and Spanish were in favour of the modernizing reforms whereas the Italians and French were against their implementation. Since Germany for the time being did not harbour any special interests in Morocco, Bismarck supported once more the French side, irritated by the Liberals' electoral victory in Britain in March-April 1880. Eventually Paris secured all of its rights at the time, expanding its interests in Morocco and by extension in the Mediterranean with German and paradoxically enough Italian backing.¹⁵⁸ France, in dispute with Britain after the occupation of Egypt, seemed to value this Italian gesture of goodwill. At that time the President of the French Republic Ferry seemed to have proposed for Italy to have freedom of movements in Tripolitania as a counterweight to the French influence in Morocco.¹⁵⁹ Nonetheless, a few years later, when the French cooperation proposals came to nothing, Rome in order to maintain the status quo in Morocco and restrain the French aspirations signed a similar agreement with Madrid in 1887 and 1891.¹⁶⁰ Foreign Minister Mancini enjoying the support not of his allies but of Spain and Britain addressed Paris directly, making known that Italy was in advance against any plan of a French expansion in Morocco. Rome, in any event, could not allow and tolerate "the dominance of a nation from Morocco to the Nile", the consolidation i.e. of a lake of exclusive (French) interests.¹⁶¹

By 1884 Italy had virtually turned into an observer of the Mediterranean developments. Russia had acquired territorial footholds and influence in the Balkans as a result of the Russo-Turkish war in 1877-1878, Austro-Hungary had occupied Bosnia and Herzegovina, Britain had won Egypt and Cyprus, France Tunisia, Greece

These were the means proposed by Britain in order to consolidate and safeguard the country's independence against the Spanish and the French ambitions. Moreover, insufficient internal rule coupled with the usual European interference could lead the state to anarchy and justify a foreign military intervention. See Medlicott, *Bismarck, Gladstone*, p. 123

¹⁵⁵ Psiroukis, *Colonialism, the Culmination*, vol. 3, pp. 256-258.

¹⁵⁶ Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale*, p. 69.

¹⁵⁷ The news of an imminent Italian military-educational mission to Morocco on 17 April 1888, sure to broaden Rome's influence alarmed the French diplomats in Tangiers. See D.D.F. (1871-1914), 1 série (1871-1900), tome VII, p. 112.

¹⁵⁸ Medlicott, *Bismarck, Gladstone*, pp. 126-130.

¹⁵⁹ Petriani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, pp. 368-370.

¹⁶⁰ Missiroli, *Da Tunisi*, p. 38.

¹⁶¹ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XI, (Rome, 1986), pp. 463-465.

Thessaly, and even Montenegro had expanded its territories by annexing Bar and Dulcino (Ulqin). As if that were not enough, Austria-Hungary was having designs on Macedonia and Britain was seeking to acquire a port in Asia Minor. The Italians so as not to remain "isolated spectators" of the developments and have "all the plunders" shared before Italy provided for its interests, approached London with the aim of taking joint action in all matters relating to the Mediterranean.¹⁶² The rift between the Central Empires and Russia on the issue of the predominance in Bulgaria, forced Bismarck to seek British friendship. The 1876-1878 exacerbation of the Pan Slavic agitation was reignited in 1885-1887 as a result of the Austro-Russian squabble about establishing influence upon Bulgaria and coincided with the emergence of a revanchist anti German feeling in France triggered by the War Minister Georges Ernest Jean-Marie Boulanger (1837-1891). Influential figures at the Russian court, the clergy, journalists and writers were asking imperatively for the liberation of the fellow Slavs from the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian grip. The prospect of a menacing encirclement between Paris and Saint Petersburg convinced Bismarck of Rome's importance as a gateway to London's cooperation. The latter was also interested in recruiting support, as it was amidst colonial clashes in Africa and Asia.¹⁶³ Britain, in addition to its traditional rivalry with France in Africa and elsewhere, felt threatened by the Russian progress in the Balkans and especially in Central Asia.¹⁶⁴ So it began to co-operate and cultivate cordial relations with Germany and Italy.¹⁶⁵ British friendship and diplomatic backing for Italy starts from the period of the Risorgimento. Because of the all-powerful British Navy and the vulnerability of its shores, Italy could not maintain a hostile attitude towards London in any case. The British manifested their friendship, besides the invitation during the campaign in Egypt as mentioned above, in the Red Sea as well where, as will be seen further on, it provided the bulwark of the Italian foreign policy in the period 1882-1885.¹⁶⁶

The Italo-British diplomatic contacts from 1882 until 1887 were aimed at the joint protection of individual interests in the Mediterranean from the Russian and French peril.¹⁶⁷ With Bismarck's blessing, di Robilant proposed to London an understanding for the maintenance of the status quo in the Aegean, the Adriatic, the Red and the Black Sea, as well as diplomatic support in Egypt in exchange for British support in Libya.¹⁶⁸ On this basis, in February 1887 a secret agreement for the Mediterranean between London and Rome was signed, which because of the latter's

¹⁶² Ibid., pp. 151-152.

¹⁶³ John Lowe, *The Great Powers, imperialism and the German problem 1865-1925*, (London-New York, 1994), pp. 60-66.

¹⁶⁴ Emmanuel Roukounas, *Diplomatic history 19th century*, (Athens, 1975), p. 127.

¹⁶⁵ Foreign Minister di Robilant stated in January 1887: "With Britain we maintain and we always grow more, when circumstances require it, those relations of special friendship which constitute a traditional area of Italian policy". See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, D.D.I., vol. XX, (Rome, 1988), pp. 406-407.

¹⁶⁶ Petignani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, pp. 413-416.

¹⁶⁷ Waddington arguably felt that these developments were taking shape at Paris' expense. See D.D.F. (1871-1914), 1 série (1871-1900), tome VII, p. 99.

¹⁶⁸ Roukounas, *Diplomatic history*, p. 128. The Italian proposals included also the creation of an allied anti-French front but Salisbury limited the agreement to a status quo maintenance treaty. See Temperley-Penson, *Foundations of British foreign policy*, pp.416-418.

alliance to Vienna, became tripartite in March 1887.¹⁶⁹ This was a Mediterranean triple alliance, which also bound Spain as a result of the preceding agreements with Italy about Morocco and the Mediterranean. The "necessity" of a consortium for the defense of the Mediterranean status quo and of the Ottoman Empire in the event of war led to the signing of the agreement.¹⁷⁰ Germany, now indirectly associated with Britain, strengthened its position in relation to the French and the Russians, who had every reason to feel threatened. The German danger in Europe and the British peril throughout the world during the last quarter of the 19th century, France and Russia to come closer to one another and ultimately to enter into alliance in 1892.

France, witnessing the creation of a common German-Austrian-Italian and more or less British front directed primarily against it, sought to destroy the threatening arrangement. Paris especially in 1887-1890 chose to attack the soft underbelly of the alliance; It withdrew its capitals and assets from Italy, raised its customs duties and even implemented a policy of diplomatically backing the Pope in his wranglings with the Italian state. Indeed it was rumoured that Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903) in his effort to undermine the Italian government promoted the idea of a French-Russian-Vatican front. In any case the French bullying had the pontiff's blessings. In early 1890 Crispi made an effort to approach Paris on the following basis: Italy would cease protesting against the French occupation of Tunis in exchange for Paris' recognition of the Italian interests in Eastern Africa. The failure of this timid attempt meant that every channel of understanding with Paris was severed and thus Rome fell deeper into Berlin's protection.¹⁷¹

For Italy, the agreement and the consequent system of security meant stability and peace and for di Robilant a personal triumph. The representatives of the parliament's right and left-wing realized that because of the geographical location, the political situation in Europe in the 19th century and the lack of means, Italy always had to be allying itself with a stronger state, paying the appropriate price. Amid hesitations and reservations they had to surrender part of their diplomatic independence, constantly falling in line with Britain or Germany, abandoning energetic policies that posed risks. The diplomatic dependance was not conducive to a policy of expansion in the Balkans and Africa. The imperialist policy, the "politica di grandezza", could come into being only through alliances and external political backing.¹⁷² The Triple Alliance, though conservative and restrictive, was offering Italy a place among the powerful, a regime of security and the necessary prestige, which sometimes as a medium and sometimes as an end in itself was paving the way for a policy of expansion. A natural consequence of the Italian co-operation with the

¹⁶⁹ Bernstein-Milza, *History of Europe*, p. 161.

¹⁷⁰ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XX, (Rome, 1988), p. 766.

¹⁷¹ William L. Langer, *La Diplomazia dell'Imperialismo (1890-1902)*, vol. 1, (New York, 1935), pp. 24-30.

¹⁷² Petrigani, *Neutralità e Alleanza*, p. 421.

Central Empires was the rupture with France, with serious political and economic ramifications for Rome.¹⁷³

This was Italy at the time that it was implementing its expansionary plans in the Red Sea. The characteristics which shaped its foreign and, up to a point, colonial policy of this period, were presented in the present chapter. The stress about security and balance in the Mediterranean, the British co-operation, the French rivalry, the belief about a fair territorial compensation in Africa due to previous failures, the ambient atmosphere, the rising nationalism, the sometimes cold, sometimes indifferent, sometimes cordial relations with the German and Austrian allies, are facts that must be taken into account to comprehend Italian colonialism.

¹⁷³ Ibid., p. 426.

5. Eritrea, the first Italian colony

5.1 The establishment of the Italian colony in Eritrea

During the second half of the 19th century, the opening of the Suez Canal shifted the focus of the Great Powers to the Red Sea area, which would become the main passage route between Europe and the Orient. The faster and easier communication with the Indies and the justified hope that this would bolster and stimulate the trade of the West with the rich markets of the East, left no Power, country and company unmoved. Therefore, the necessity for Europeans to establish commercial stations and to occupy bases between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, which would facilitate and strengthen profitable commercial transactions, became self-evident. The canal was opened by French workers under the direction of Ferdinand Marie Count Lesseps (1805-1894), with the aim of strengthening the French trade with the East.¹ The opening of the canal in 1869, a technical and scientific achievement of colossal importance, profoundly affected and reshaped the relations, policies and destiny of three continents.

Already since 1856, the Italian government, still located at Turin, had implemented a plan for the expansion of the Genoa port's capacity in anticipation of the sensational opening.² The Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Trade sent the expert professor, Sapeto to Egypt in 1863 in order to investigate the effects and the consequences of the Suez Canal to the Italian economy. After the end of his mission he published a book entitled *L'Italia e il canale di Suez*, in which he summed up his positions and advices towards the Italian government: if Italy was to gain a prominent position in the world market, it ought to settle immediately the issue of the rail connection between north and south, move as quickly as possible to acquire a coal mine for the purpose of resupplying the Italian ships with coal en route to the Orient and appoint a commissioner to the Red Sea area with the responsibilities of facilitating trade relations between the Italian and the indigenous, dispatching a flotilla of naval vessels in the waters in questions and establishing a base at Socotra or at Suakin, as a commercial station.³

Under the influence of these ideas and enthusiasm the plan to acquire a station at the Red Sea began to interest the industrial houses of the North, the shipping companies and the chambers of commerce, particularly those of the most important Italian port, Genoa. On 16 March 1866, during the proceedings of a meeting, its

¹E.M. Burns, *European history, the western culture: Modern Times*, trans. T. Darveris, (Thessaloniki, 2006), p. 689.

²Angelo Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa Orientale, dall'unità alla Marcia su Roma*, (Rome-Bari, 1976), p. 33.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

members unanimously declared: "Of course we do not aspire to great conquests, which yield results that do not reward the sacrifices. What we want is to put under your consideration the benefits that Italy would secure with a harbour at which our citizens would be able to find assistance, justice and aid [...]. From becoming conquerors of vast expanses to ending up without a port [...] the distance is huge."⁴ Thus the ideological basis of a colonialism oriented to establishing naval bases and commercial stations is detected and not of a policy of direct control aiming to territorial expansion. It was believed that the frantic search for bases and their establishment with demographic and commercial goals would elevate the Italian prestige and economy. Obtaining stations was not only legitimate but imperative and consistent "with the example of other nations and of History".⁵ In 1863 the Minister of Education, Michele Benedetto Gaetano Amari (1806-1889) underlined the unprecedented opportunity of consolidating Italy on the coast of the Red Sea and as a result expanding the Italian trade to the Arabian Peninsula and Ethiopia.⁶ Between 1859 and 1869 Rome had not been officially active in the region. However, as has been seen, many explorers had already looked into the commercial and demographic features of the area in question and of Eastern Africa in general. In October 1869 the plenum of Genoa's Chamber of Commerce suggested again to the government to "establish at a Red Sea port, preferably at Sekeira, a trading company, where our ships would find coal, security and asylum", whereas that of Venice on 27 September suggested Sceikh Said on the left bank of the Arabian Peninsula.⁷

In 1868 the Minister of Shipping, Antonio Augusto Riboty (1816-1888) invited the Italian shipping companies to put to use every resource to confront and cope with the upcoming international competition. The Rubattino Company responded positively to the Minister's proposal, suggesting Genoa's connection with Alexandria of Egypt and through the Canal, with the ports of the Indies and Far East.⁸ From all the shipping companies, Rubattino was the only one that realized and exploited in good time the frenzy of the ruling class for the exploitation of the Suez Canal. In 1868 the company inaugurated the shipping lane Genoa-Livorno-Alexandria-Port Said. Subsidized by the state it connected Genoa with Mumbai in the spring of 1870 and hoped to promote the Italian trade, until then of minor importance, to the East by doing the same with Singapore. Rubattino expanded its commercial interests in East Africa, and eliminated the competition under the government's

⁴Francesco Surdich, "Il colonialismo italiano, l'imperialismo straccione," in *Il Calendario*, (Sept. 1996), p.8.

⁵Tomaso Sillani, *L'Africa Orientale Italiana e il conflitto Italo-Etiopico*, (Rome, 1936), p. 17.

⁶Raffaele R. Ciasca, *Storia coloniale dell'Italia contemporanea, da Assab all'Impero*, (Milan, 1940), p. 81.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁸Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 35. The company in question was the one that allowed Garibaldi's thousand to "steal" two of its ships for their famous Sicilian campaign in 1860 and the one that was involved in the purchase of the Tunisian railway as has been already examined.

auspices.⁹ In reality it was not just the company that benefited from this collaboration. The government preferred not to act officially for the occupation of a colony, an event that might cause international implications, and masked its actions behind a private company, which could lease unhindered any location as a port or as a coal depot for its ships, and afterwards cede it with brief and legal procedures to the Italian state in return for a fee.¹⁰ The Menabrea government, Rubattino and Vittorio Emanuele himself acquiesced and supported the colonial undertaking seeking a "humble expansion".¹¹

Sapeto, as the expert, and rear admiral William Acton (1825-1896) were dispatched to the Red Sea in 1869 to select an appropriate site and find yet another "free" area (*res nullius*). Receiving a state grant of 80,000 lire they departed from Brindisi on 12 October and sailed to the Arabian coast where their two most prevalent objectives, Khur Amera and Sceikh Said were situated.¹² The two men were disappointed when they were informed by the British colonial authorities of Aden that the former had been already occupied by the British and the latter by a French company.¹³ The situation in this acrimonious period of the new imperialism was so fluid, especially in the area of the Red Sea after the opening of the Canal, that entire regions were turned into protectorates and dominions in a blink of an eye.¹⁴ Hence the mission headed towards the African coast where it located the coast of Assab, which, according to Sapeto, was strongly reminiscent of La Spezia and Rio de Janeiro and ruled that the site in question was "the most appropriate for our plan of a commercial station".¹⁵ Furthermore, he determined with a quick glance that the local population was peaceful, the access easy, the mooring safe and the water reservoirs satisfying. Assab, a communication and commercial hub between Arabia and Ethiopia since ancient times, was inhabited by the tribe of Dankali or Danakil, subjects of the Sultan of Anfari.¹⁶ The major advantage of the region was that apparently it did not belong to any Power and therefore its acquisition would not cause reactions, complications and confrontations.

With the somewhat premature conclusion that Assab could become the trading centre of all the surrounding hinterland, which included Tigre, Scioa, Massaua

⁹Gian Luca Podesta, "Gli investimenti italiani in Africa orientale 1869-1919", *Annali dell'Istituto italo-germanico in Trento*, v. 24, 1998, p. 148.

¹⁰Roberto Battaglia, *La prima Guerra d'Africa*, (Turin, 1958), pp. 82-83.

¹¹Carlo Zagli, *La conquista dell'Africa, studi e ricerche*, vol 1, (Naples, 1984), p. 193.

¹²Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 37.

¹³ Cesare Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali, cenni storici-geografici ed economici*, (Rome, 1927), 48.

¹⁴ Of course, European presence in the region existed well before 1869. The ports of the Red Sea were open to French trade already since 1843. In 1862 the Sultan of Tajura conceded Obock (Djibouti) and the hinterland to the French for 50,000 francs. At the opposite shore of the Red Sea, Britain brought under its control Perim and the strategically important Aden of today's Yemen in 1839, see Ciasca, *Storia coloniale dell'Italia*, p. 82.

¹⁵ Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 84.

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 37-38.

and Beilul. Sapeto and Acton held negotiations with the brothers Ibrahim and Hassan ben Ahmad, who were as they were claiming, the beneficiaries of the rights of the location in question.¹⁷ With a contract on 15 November 1869 they granted the area between the "Lumah Cape and the Ganga mountain", six kilometres long and another six wide, to Sapeto for 6,000 "Maria Teresa" coins, i.e. 30,000 lire.¹⁸ Moreover, a small additional amount was paid as security deposit to ensure that the brothers would not to cede the location to another interested party. On 8 March of the next year, sailing from Livorno on Rubattino's ship "Africa", Sapeto returned to Assab not only to ratify the agreement but also to extend the boundaries of the new colony.¹⁹ Three days later the ben Ahmad brothers, signed the new contract with the representatives of Rubattino and ceded, under the form of a lease, the surrounding islands as well for 800 additional "Maria Teresa" coins.²⁰ In addition to the adjacent islands, the coast of Buia was also acquired while part of the territories belonging to the Sultan of Raheita fell into the Italian sphere of influence; Raheita would formally become an Italian protectorate much later in March 1880.²¹ The Italian company was now in position to utilize the coast as it wished since it was its undisputed ruler, proving "to the world that the Italians were not only playing the leading part in brave and useful undertakings but they also knew to honour them!"²² This time the fall of the Menabrea government and the assumption of power by Lanza did not have a negative effect.²³ On 13 March the Italian flag was raised in the sky of Assab amid gun salutes from "Africa". By 1870 Assab had cost Rubattino, essentially the government, 104,100 lire from which 51,100 for the costs of travel, 41,200 for the payment of Sultans and 12,000 for the services of Sapeto.²⁴

The baseless enthusiasm was succeeded by doubts, criticism and reservations. At a time when General Bixio was pressuring the government to proceed to the official occupation of Assab²⁵ Rome dispatched to Rubattino's base a consultative committee of experts, which taking into account all the parameters adjudicated that at the given time the founding of a colony would have no practical value for the Italian state.²⁶ Assab seemed unsuitable as a penal colony or as a market

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 86.

¹⁸ Giorgio Rochat, *Il colonialismo italiano*, (Turin, 1974), p. 20.

¹⁹ In total, five contracts between Rubattino and the local chiefs authorized the cession of Assab and its surroundings to the Italian company and subsequently to the Italian state for the amount of 416,000 lire. The first on November 15 1869 between Sapeto and the Ahmad brothers, the second on March 11 1870, the third on December 30 1879 with Berehan, Sultan of Raheita, the fourth on March 15 1880 again with Berehan and finally the fifth on May 15 1880 with members of the Ahmad family. See Italia (Italian colonial government), *Colonia eritrea, Assab (Allegato 1 alla raccolta degli atti dell'autorità)*, (Asmara, 1911), pp. 7-20.

²⁰ Surdich, "Il colonialismo italiano, l'imperialismo straccione", p. 8.

²¹ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, 107.

²² Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 87.

²³ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 38.

²⁴ The amount was allocated by the state treasury and more specifically the ministries of Shipping, Agriculture, Foreign Affairs and Public Works, see Ibid., p. 40.

²⁵ Luigi Chiala, *La spedizione di Massaua*, (Turin-Naples, 1888), p. 5.

²⁶ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 41.

for the Italian agricultural goods.²⁷ The explorer Carlo Guarmani (1828-1884) declared: "For me it is impossible for Assab (to become) the trading station of Scioa, impossible as a market, it is worth absolutely nothing."²⁸ The above view was espoused by other explorers too. Representatives of the Left opposed the undertaking not only for ideological reasons, but for practical ones too, such as the burdening of the state budget without any tangible benefit.²⁹ According to others "Assab would never be a port to compete with Aden's commercial importance, let alone overcome it" and "Assab had no value, neither for the caravans nor as a commercial station nor as a market for Abyssinia."³⁰ Ethiopia, which was supposed to be absorbing the Italian products and exporting its own, was the "most wretched country of Africa" and did not possess huge gold, ivory and coffee reserves as the Europeans believed or as they wanted to believe.³¹ Critics of the plan to officially occupy Assab reasonably wondered why, if it had such a great strategic and economic value, as Sapeto and Bixio were maintaining, it was not already occupied by the other Powers. The majority of the anti-Africanists claimed that political colonies was an outdated ideological construct of another era, and agreed with reservations only to the establishment of commercial or naval bases.

Opinions about Assab diverged. Some believed that it was worth the trouble and the expenses of converting it into a harbour and a trade centre in view of the upcoming economic boom that the opening of the canal would yield.³² Also it could, with the appropriate work and the construction of docks and naval facilities, become a foothold and a resupply base for the expeditionary missions and economic undertakings in Eastern Africa.³³ Sapeto in his book *Assab and its critics*, which was published in 1879, defended his choice, characterized the criticism as excessive and presented the region as rich in sugar, coffee, cotton, wheat, ivory and tobacco. The only thing that was needed for the promotion of the Italian products in the interior was opening up and protecting a road network. The connection to the heartland, the strategic position of the dominion and the active involvement of Italian businessmen would turn Assab into a transit trade centre of Eastern Africa and Yemen. If this objective was unattainable and utopian, it could at least yield coal depots and thus assist Italian merchant vessels and warships. Sapeto, exalting the strategic-geographical value of the region also added: "[...] the European power that will make

²⁷ A traveler-journalist deemed it as sandy, extremely hot and "horrendous", lacking wells, pastures, recourses, transportation arteries and even vegetation. See "Assab" *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 12, Friday, 16 January 1885, p. 1.

²⁸ H. Romain Rainero, *La questione di Assab e Carlo Guarmani*, (Florence, 1975), p. 147.

²⁹ Surdich, "Il colonialismo italiano, l'imperialismo straccione", p. 9.

³⁰ Aldo de Jaco, *Di mal d'Africa si muore, cronaca inedita dell'unità d'Italia*, (Rome, 1972), p. 27.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

³² The surroundings may have appeared to be a wasteland but the "national devotion", "association spirit" and "commercial and industrial interest" could transform Assab. See Archivio Storico Ministero Affari Esteri (henceforth cited as ASMAE), Archivio Storico del Soppresso Ministero dell'Africa Italiana (henceforth cited as ASMAI), position 1/4, folder 22, Rome, 16 January 1882.

³³ Pasquale Stanislao Mancini, *La colonia italiana di Assab. Discorsi del Ministro degli Affari Esteri (Mancini) preceduti dal disegno di legge e dalla Relazione Ministeriale*, (Rome, 1882), p. 16.

Abyssinia an ally or dominate it, will become the controller of Red Sea's commerce and of continental Egypt's commercial destiny".³⁴ Assab according to others "had a fascinating future", was the "seed from which the tree of the second Roman Empire would grow" and the foundation stone of the colonial structure, which "would bring honour to New Italy." The Italian vice-consul in Aden, Giuseppe Biennenfeld Rolph (1838-1913) asserted in January 1872:"[...]a lot has been written and said on Assab, but noone rightly appraises this port's importance in terms of commerce[...]. Assuredly when the Somalis and the Abyssinians feel secure to find customers for their products, they will more willingly go to Assab sparing many days of travel and find protection in the established government [...] it would be a real pity if the Italian government abandoned this project for long; Assab belongs to Italy and Italy has to extract the best profit for the expansion of its commerce. Therefore, I invite the entire Italian commercial sector to ask from the government the completion of what has been started, taking quickly and efficiently Assab's possession [...]".³⁵The more ardent imperialists foresaw the creation of a military base, a correctional facility or of an agricultural colony, where Italian citizens would find land under the state's protection in a relatively short distance and not in faraway Argentina and Australia.³⁶

This interpretation was rejected by the critics of the undertaking because of the climate, the barren land and the lack of water. Indeed, the region was arid, sparsely populated and had no road network so that it would be connected with the mainland.³⁷ According to Commander De Amazaga, who was sent in September 1879 to study Assab's potential, it was not suitable for a military, penal or agricultural colony but only for a naval or a commercial base.³⁸ The surrounding area, Dancalia, was also infertile and poor and clearly not lending itself as a market of products as the more optimistic were hoping.³⁹ Ezio De Vecchi, (1826-1897), general and chief of the Army's topographic institute after an inspectional mission in 1871 concluded that for a series of practical reasons Assab could not render itself suitable for a naval or

³⁴Daniele Natili, *Un laboratorio coloniale nell' Italia post-unitaria: La Società Geografica Italiana e le origini dell'espansione in Etiopia (1867-1883)*, Ph.D Dissertation, University of Tuscia di Viterbo, (Rome, 2008), p. 31.

³⁵Natili, *Un laboratorio coloniale*, p. 36.

³⁶Mancini, *colonia italiana di Assab*, p. 412.

³⁷ The Italian commissioner of Assab himself during the period 1881-1884 ascertained the lack of roads, the poverty not only of the surrounding area but of the sea as well and the absence of any commercial activity. He even added that just 1% of the land could be cultivated and that the only ships that were docking there were boats and fishing vessels! See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol., XIV, (Rome, 1991), pp. 287-290.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 413.

³⁹ The area of today's Eritrea was, from an agricultural and an animal husbandry point of view, poor. See Società Geografica Italiana, *L'Italia in Africa, incivilimento e sviluppo dell' Eritrea, della Somalia e della Libia*, (Rome, 1948), p. 15. The fascist regime commissioned two studies of Eritrea's agricultural-economic condition during the 20th century: Ministero delle Colonie, ufficio studi e propaganda, *Le colonie italiane. Flora ed economia agraria degli indigeni*, ed. A. Maugini, (Rome, 1931) and Ministero delle Colonie, ufficio studi e propaganda, *Le Colonie italiane, notiziario geografico-economico*, (Rome, 1929).

penitentiary colony.⁴⁰ The same pessimistic judgment was shared by the explorer Cerruti; nevertheless he sided in favour of the coast's definite acquisition.⁴¹

Few were those who found some usage value in the dominion and believed that it could actually contribute to the growth of the economy and the expansion of the Italian trade.⁴² Its more ardent supporters were the shipbuilding companies, the Court and the Army. In reality the ruling class was hardly preoccupied with the economic penetration of the African hinterland or with the safe anchoring. It was aspiring only to the acquisition of prestige through civilizing, conquering, fighting crime and battles. The quest for prestige, the humiliations such as that in Tunisia, the boredom after the turbulent period of the national rebirth and the enormous proportions that the immigration problem was taking influenced their position.

Ten years after the purchase of Assab nobody knew how to put it to use or what status it should be under (protectorate or territorial annexation), while the calls about its minimal value and its abandonment were growing in number. The coast remained unexploited and the only visible sign of Italian presence was the sign "Rubattino Property purchased on 11 March 1870."⁴³ Furthermore, the company that held the title of the coast's ownership did not utilize it, preferring the ports of Aden or Gedda for resupplying its ships.⁴⁴ Neither Rubattino, nor the government, influenced by the indifference of the public opinion, was paying the agreed annual amount to the Sultan of Raheita for the use of the areas surrounding Assab.⁴⁵ One could further argue that the Italians chose to act at the worst possible time. No matter how subtly and quietly they were operating in the Red Sea, their activity could not go unnoticed since the entire world had literally turned its gaze there after the opening of the Suez Canal.

The inaction, the disagreements and the dissent were not the only hurdles that the Italian government encountered. Egypt was the first to have noticed the Italian actions. On 29 April 1870, four days after Sapeto's departure, the ship "Khartum" landed Egyptian troops on the coast of Assab. They threatened and physically assaulted the local indigenous people they came upon, under the pretext of insubordination and co-operation with the Europeans. Rome demanded the withdrawal of the Egyptians and Cairo, in its turn, called for the evacuation of the area and the restoration of the status quo. The Italians responded that the transfer of Assab to Rubattino was valid and legal.⁴⁶ They added that Egypt was in no position to

⁴⁰Natili, *Un laboratorio coloniale*, p. 34.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 37.

⁴² Those who were hoping for an Italian economic revolution after 1869 would have been disappointed by the official statistics of the company that controlled the Canal. In 1870 it recorded 486 vessels of a total capacity of 493,911 tonnes. The Italian percentage of the total tonnage was calculated at 1%! See Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 93.

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 15-24.

⁴⁴Podesta, "Gli investimenti italiani", p. 149.

⁴⁵ Sillani, *L'Africa Orientale Italiana*, p. 12.

⁴⁶ Ciasca, *Storia coloniale dell'Italia*, p. 84.

raise claims because the Porte, its overlord, never had sovereign rights over the coastline. Therefore, the Porte could not raise any claims either, other than religious.⁴⁷ While the future of the location hung in the balance a nerve-racking diplomatic conflict between Rome, Cairo, Istanbul and London began. Someone aptly stated that Italy's greatest expenditure, regarding Assab, was the paper used to defend Italian claims.⁴⁸

Egypt, an autonomous entity before the British conquest, was maintaining expansionist designs on the whole of Eastern Africa. Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia and the entire coastline up to the Horn of Africa were in the sights of Khedive Ismail (1830-1895), the unfit successor of Muhammad Ali Pasha al-Mas'ud Ibn agha (1769-1849). The obstacle of the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia was impenetrable for the Egyptian army and formed the bulwark against the Egyptian imperialist expansion. Cairo moved diplomatically and militarily to sever the flow of supplies and weapons to Ethiopia and isolate the country, with the ultimate aim of subjugating it. Istanbul, the formal suzerain of the coastline from the period of its conquest by the Ottomans in the 16th century, had transferred the jurisdiction of Zeila and Beilul to Cairo with firmans in 1866 and in 1873.⁴⁹ Cairo managed to control a large part of the Sudanese hinterland and the whole of the coastline from Suez to Berbera in the south, by installing outposts and garrisons. The Egyptian government in an attempt to discourage Rubattino, founded the "Administration of the Red Sea coast" and appointed its deputies to all the coastal cities in an attempt to affirm its rights in the region. The encirclement of Ethiopia was a fact and war was inevitable. The military operations between 1873 and 1875 resulted in an overwhelming victory for the Ethiopians. The consequences of the Ethiopian triumph radically altered the balance of power. The failure and the destruction of the Egyptian army also meant the deterioration of its already anaemic state finances.⁵⁰ For Ethiopia the unexpected victory translated into maintaining its independence, rallying against external enemies and strengthening the central rule of Emperor Yohannes IV (1821-1889). The Ethiopians after their victory reasonably believed that the territories they had detached from the Egyptians now belonged to them. At the end of the 19th century, when Italy was acquiring rights on the Red Sea's coastline, Addis Ababa, Cairo, Istanbul and of course London had a say in the region.⁵¹

The attitude of the involved parties towards the Italian intrusion ranged from distrust to outright hostility. Rome, naturally, addressed London for mediation and diplomatic support. The British, initially opposed to any rival presence in the Red Sea,

⁴⁷ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XII, (Rome, 1987), p. 499.

⁴⁸ "Ci costò più di carta che per ogni altra spesa". See Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 91.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 91.

⁵⁰ Khedive Ismail sold 177,000 shares of the Canal company to the British in order to save his country from bankruptcy. But the situation was irreversible and public outcry in conjunction with the economic deprivation of the people caused the revolution and the British intervention in 1882. See Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 42.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 43-47.

notified the Italian side in 1879 that the coastline belonged directly to the Porte and indirectly to the khedive.⁵² Officially, Britain was respecting the rights of the Porte even though in practice it was the first to infringe on them and had no interest to intervene in favour of Rome in the Italo-Egyptian sparring. Britain maintained a predominant position in the Red Sea, the "sensitive chord" of its Empire, and viewed with concern the Italian progress.⁵³ In order to safeguard its position in Aden, it was opposed to the establishment of yet another European colony in the area.⁵⁴ The Italians however, claimed they were seeking cordial relations with the British to achieve close co-operation in economic and "humanitarian" areas.⁵⁵ Additionally, British backing would be useful in the dispute with Cairo which, hostile to any European intervention in its domestic matters, had turned towards Paris in 1881 in search of allies.⁵⁶ The Egyptian initiative failed because at that point in time the French had every reason to urge the Italians away from Tunisia and towards Eastern Africa. It seems that the British, considering the Italian presence in Assab dangerous and wanting to protect their Indian empire, were raising hurdles, shielded behind the governments of the Sultan and of the khedive. It is not coincidental that when they changed attitude and started to co-operate with the Italians all the protests subsided as if by magic.

The firm position of Benjamin Disraeli's conservative government that Assab belonged to Egypt was deconstructed when he was succeeded by Gladstone with Granville as the Foreign Minister.⁵⁷ When the French colonial antagonism intensified and the situation in Egypt and in Sudan started to unfold ominously for the British, they decided conditionally to support Italy seeing it as a weak but potentially useful ally for their interests in Eastern Africa.⁵⁸ A docile and co-operative Italy was certainly preferable to the rival France in the Red Sea. Perhaps they realized that Rome and Assab would never be in a position to remove London from the dominant position that it enjoyed in the region.⁵⁹ The conditions set then by the British for the acknowledgement of Assab were that it was never to be converted into a military base, that the hinterland or the adjacent islands were not to be fortified and that it was to serve only commercial purposes without "any political value".⁶⁰ Cairoli confided to

⁵²Sillani, *L'Africa Orientale Italiana*, p. 20.

⁵³Stefano Carrara, *L'esercito e i suoi corpi*, (Rome, 1971), p. 26.

⁵⁴Tommaso Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale e Francesco Crispi*, (Milan, 1928), pp. 6.

⁵⁵ The humanitarian reasons cited by Rome were relevant with civilizing activities and the cracking down of slavery. See Eugenio Passamenti, *Dall'eccidio di Beilul alla questione di Raheita*, (Rome, 1937), p. 88.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 92.

⁵⁷Carrara, *L'esercito*, p. 26.

⁵⁸London's international position was becoming ever more difficult. The French president Ferry implemented a policy that would prevent Britain's definitive consolidation in Egypt, at a time when the issue of settling the Afghan frontier with Russia was reaching a stalemate. See Zaghi, *La conquista dell'Africa*, p. 218.

⁵⁹Nicola Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione coloniale italiana*, (Bologna, 2002), p. 51.

⁶⁰Ciasca, *Storia coloniale dell'Italia*, p. 88.

the British ambassador in Rome on 19 April 1880: "Assab will never be a government dominion of military nature".⁶¹ British tolerance had been secured. In the summer of 1879 the government, convinced that it could draw from Assab, with relatively limited expenses, considerable economic benefits, allowed Rubattino to reoccupy it after approximately ten years of inaction.⁶² On 26 September a state official was sent to the site as Italy's consul.⁶³ Everything indicated that it would not be long before the dominion was officially annexed by Italy. Two events of crucial importance, at Beilul and Raheita, accelerated the events.

Between 25 and 30 May 1881 the secretary of the Italian commissioner, Giuseppe Maria Giulietti (1847-1881) set off from Assab escorted by twelve marines and travellers, with the aim of penetrating and exploring the mainland.⁶⁴ At a distance of five days from Beilul the mission was ambushed by a local tribe and neutralized. The event itself troubled the Italian public opinion but it was the manner with which the government chose to handle the issue that infuriated it. The new Depretis government (after the fall of Cairoli due to the Tunisian fiasco) and the Foreign Minister Mancini asked the Egyptian authorities to investigate the matter and to arrest the culprits, recognizing indirectly Egyptian jurisdiction in the region and ruining the Italian prestige in Europe and Africa.⁶⁵ The Egyptian authorities accepted but, desiring themselves the withdrawal of the Italians, did not dedicate themselves to the search of the perpetrators with zeal,⁶⁶ according to eyewitnesses' accounts. Thus the poor results of the investigation did not satisfy the Italian government.⁶⁷

A few days later Egyptian troops threatened Raheita, south of Assab, with the goal of restoring it to the authority of the Egypt's khedive.⁶⁸ The Sultan of the region had accepted the Italian protection and thus Rome tried to preserve the "independence" and the territorial integrity of its protectorate.⁶⁹ The goal was ultimately achieved; Raheita remained within the Italian sphere of influence but at the expense of Italy's moral and political standing in the Red Sea.⁷⁰ Even though it dispatched warships to the region, it entrusted the resolution of the matter to the British authorities, a decision which was also strongly criticized. To combat such phenomena and to strengthen its position Rome had to finally annex Assab, gaining legitimacy and voice in the proceedings of Eastern Africa.

⁶¹ ASMAE, ERITREA, envelope 4, folder commenti politici, n. 75, Assab 28 February 1881.

⁶² Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XII, Rome 1987, p. 736.

⁶³ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, pp. 50-52.

⁶⁴ Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali*, p. 51.

⁶⁵ Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 141.

⁶⁶ ASMAE, ASMAI, position 1/3, folder 17, n. 252, Rome, 29 March 1882.

⁶⁷ It was a crass mistake of the government, which squandered a great opportunity to strengthen its prestige over the local populations. Judging by the result "a refusal from the Egyptian side would have been preferable" to this parody. See Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali*, p. 52.

⁶⁸ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XII, (Rome, 1987), p. 583.

⁶⁹ Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 144.

⁷⁰ Ciasca, *Storia coloniale dell'Italia*, p. 87.

Britain acknowledged the Italian rights on Assab, under the aforementioned conditions on 16 February 1882. Egypt and the Ottoman Empire unable to oppose Britain did not react initially, and later accepted the Italo-British agreement.⁷¹ Italy recognized the Porte's rights on the whole of the Red Sea's African coastline except for Assab and the surrounding area and the Egyptians-Ottomans acceded to "the purchases, made by the government of his Excellency's, the King of Italy between 1870-1880 on the coast of Assab with every subsequent right of full ownership, legality and sovereignty."⁷² Since the diplomatic difficulties were overcome the path was now paved for the official acquisition of the colony by the Italian government. On 10 March 1882, with a regulation which could be considered as the first colonial law of New Italy, Assab's ownership passed from Rubattino to the Italian state for 416,000 lire, an amount that was representing all the operating costs of the dominion in the preceding decade.⁷³ Assab gave Italy the opportunity to put into practice its plan of "civilization and peace". The more realists viewed the purchase as the first step towards a disaster since with it "Italy was falling into a trap" and could no longer turn back.⁷⁴ The parliament approved the bill with 147 votes for and 72 against. The Senate seemed more indecisive but eventually gave its consent to the act of birth of the Italian colonialism with 39 "ayes" to 32 "noes".⁷⁵ On 27 April the parliament approved with 20 votes for and 18 against the military expenses of the colony and in the following year dispatched the first core of soldiers.⁷⁶

On 12 June 1882, Mancini presented the "report on the legal charter of Assab" to the parliament. According to it the government ought to promote those conditions of prosperity and education that would allow in the future the implementation of the Italian legislation, the growth of trade and the safeguard of peace and justice.⁷⁷ In this context the Italian *chargés d'affaires*⁷⁸ to the Red Sea had to maintain friendly and commercial relations with the tribes of the hinterland, by signing agreements, and to

⁷¹ Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 145.

⁷² Mancini, *colonia italiana di Assab*, pp. 42-43.

⁷³ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 122-123.

⁷⁴ Carrara, *L'esercito*, p. 109. Despite "our disadvantages we are nevertheless always sons of Machiavelli and we must in any case because of our geographical position find a way to apparently play a double game," meaning the simultaneous involvement of Rome in Europe and Africa, see Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XII, Rome 1987, p. 650.

⁷⁵ Sillani, *L'Africa Orientale Italiana*, p. 21.

⁷⁶ Antonella Randazzo, *Roma predona, il colonialismo italiano in Africa*, (Milan, 2006), p. 22.

⁷⁷ Justice was deemed a necessity of primary importance for a region, until recently "savage". See Attilio Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani, i primi tentativi e le prime ricerche di una colonia in Italia (1861-1882)*, (Turin, 1897), p. 410.

⁷⁸ The office of the diplomat-commissary for Assab was in fact instituted by Foreign Minister Cairoli on December 24 1880, thus creating the first Italian colonial administrative nucleus in Africa. See Chiara Giorgi, *L'Africa come Carriera, Funzioni e Funzionari del Colonialismo Italiano*, (Roma, 2012), p. 65. The royal commissary was supposed to organize every aspect of the colony's command and formulate the civil services applying the state's norms and provisions. He was assisted in his duties by an accountant, a secretary, a Deputy of public security and two interpreters; they instituted the first authorized nucleus of civil servants in Africa. See ASMAE, ASMAI, position 1/1, folder 5, Rome, 24 December 1880.

respect the morals, the customs, the needs and the religion of the local population with a view to achieving equality and freedom. Furthermore, Mancini called the indigenous inhabitants of Assab "fellow citizens", and suggested that there be political representation for them in the Italian parliament, a measure liberal and progressive. Mancini claimed his sole ambition in the region was to turn Italy's name into a "synonym of integrity and conformity to the law, of good faith to issues, of conscious respect for justice and laws [...]".⁷⁹ According to the Italians, their presence in the area of Assab was beneficial not only for the local population but also for all the nations.⁸⁰

On 5 July 1882 Assab was proclaimed an Italian territory under the "Legal proceedings for Assab" law, as proposed earlier by the Foreign Minister Mancini on June 12 in the parliament.⁸¹ This royal act reserved for the government total executive control, and gave the Italian parliament legislative authority over the colony. Signed by King Umberto Rainerio Carlo Emanuele Giovanni Maria Ferdinando Eugenio di Savoia (1844-1900), who had inherited the throne after Victor Emmanuel's passing in 1878, the act also asserted that Assab would be governed by a civil commissary under the supervision of the Foreign Ministry. The Ministry had to enact public works, stipulate trade and friendship agreements with the tribes bordering the colony, establish a customs free port, guaranteed international shipping, and promised to abstain from imposing of any kind of fiscal contributions from the natives for 30 years. As for Assab's juridical sector, the laws, penal codes and legal provisions of metropolitan Italy were uniformly applied;⁸² for instance, the Italian updated 1889 penal code was applied identically to the Red Sea possessions. Furthermore, the commissary had to appoint a magistrate, specialized in Islamic legislation and customary law in order to operate in the name of the King of Italy.

Opposition deputies, like Cesare Parenzo (1842-1898), criticizing colonial rule, claimed that peoples are not for sale or purchase and that the acquisition of Assab consisted a clear inconsistency with Italy's "Risorgimental", emancipative values. Indeed, due to the dynamic opposition the act barely passed from the parliament.⁸³

⁷⁹ Ciasca, *Storia coloniale dell'Italia*, pp. 90-91.

⁸⁰ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XIII, (Rome, 1991), pp. 37-38.

⁸¹ Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali*, p. 51.

⁸² Italy was bound by the 21 December 1885 convention to respect among other the antislavery laws that were mutually agreed in August 1877 between Cairo and London. The nature of the provisions and the respective punishment were formulated in May 1886. See Vincenzo Mellana, *L'Italia in Africa. Serie giuridico-amministrativa v. 2, L'amministrazione della giustizia nei territori oltremare tomo I, l'amministrazione della giustizia in Eritrea e in Somalia (1869-1936)*, (Rome, 1971), p. 27.

⁸³ Edoardo Arbib, "La questione d'Africa alla Camera Italiana", *Nuova Antologia di scienze, lettere ed arti*, n.145 (January 1896), p. 216.

The first commissary of Assab, Giovanni Branchi (1846-1936) assumed his duties right after Sapeto's recall on 9 January 1881,⁸⁴ but was officially nominated later that year.⁸⁵ He and his successor Giulio Pestalozza handled the immediate problems of the colony and took steps to organize public security by establishing a police force, exploring the surroundings, expanding the port installations and setting up an elementary health care service.⁸⁶ After the annexation, expanding towards the hinterland was next in line, before the British or the Egyptians could eventually act; Although Assab by 1885 had developed sufficiently to be able to support up to a thousand inhabitants, it would not be safe and profitable without a sizeable expansion. Pestalozza and the explorer Luigi Pennazzi (1839-1895) advocated publicly for the strengthening of the Italian possessions in neighbouring Aussa and Scioa.⁸⁷ Hence, the Italian officials called for strengthening the outposts' defensive strength, while the government assured the British, the Ottomans and the Egyptians that they were not doing a military build-up.

It was at this point that rule over the outpost was transferred from civilian to military authorities. Assab's security was entrusted to a Defence Command captain who came to head the civil services as well, annulling the role of the civil commissary on November 5 1885. He, in his turn, had to answer to the Supreme commander, supervisor of all military forces in Africa. The 21 May 1885, n. 3132 law, regarding the application of the military law in Assab assigned jurisdiction to the newly instituted military court of the colony, revoking the authority of the "military territorial" court in Bari over legal affairs in Africa.⁸⁸ Finally, long-term plans for developing Assab into a commercial centre required investments, since "without sacrifices there are no gains"⁸⁹ However, as we will see Rome was unable to attract substantial private capital.

Summarizing, as has been seen, Italy did not find breathing space next to the other Powers in the strategically important Mediterranean and its leaders felt the country needed to discover other fields of action. Italy was expelled in one way or another and had to turn its gaze to the Red Sea. There it was entangled in an

⁸⁴According to the colonel Frigerio (Galeazzo Frigerio 1805-1891) Sapeto's arrogant behavior caused suspicion and distrust to the neighboring tribes in Assab and he had to be dismissed, see AUSSME D4 Eritrea, folder 45, n. 46/a, Assab, February 4 1881.

⁸⁵Branchi acted as Assab's commissary from January 1881 until 1884 (1881-May 1882 and December 1883-August 1884). The command of the troops as well as other administrative services were carried out by: Carlo De Amezaga from December 1879 until July 1880, officer Frigerio from July 5 1880 until 1884 and diplomat Giulio Pestalozza (1850-1930) until January 1890, when the Italian possessions were unified administratively and politically.

⁸⁶Cesare Marinucci, "L'Amministrazione centrale coloniale dall'acquisto di Assab alla costituzione del Ministero delle Colonie" in *L'Italia in Africa, serie giuridico-amministrativa*, v. 1, (1869-1955), (Rome, 1963), p.5.

⁸⁷Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp.164-165.

⁸⁸Mellana, *L'Italia in Africa*, p. 28.

⁸⁹Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XII, (Rome, 1987), pp. 501-502.

extremely complex situation where property rights were disputed by at least two countries. On the home front discord and confrontations delayed Italy's consolidation at Assab for about ten years. The least that one would expect was that all these efforts, expenditures and consultations would have been rewarded with a colony rich in raw materials and profitable for the Italian trade. But that was not the case. Assab in 1881 was an insignificant village of one hundred and sixty residents (11 Italians, 55 Arabs, 93 Danakil and Indian) that was suffering, according to Guarmani, from a lack of infrastructure, arable land and water, whereas the climate and the aggression of the surrounding tribes would impede the living conditions of future settlers.⁹⁰ Whether or not the Italians acted wisely by selecting the African coast of the Red Sea as their first colonial effort, will become perceivable further on.

The Italian government, before taking further action on other locations on the African coast of the Red Sea such as Zula, Beilul and Massaua, wanted to know if the British posed any objections.⁹¹ At the same time the Italian diplomatic authorities in Istanbul were trying to persuade the Sultan to accept the Italian presence. They were arguing that since the Egyptians could not control such a vast area and they were withdrawing, the more favourable and preferable presence for the Ottoman interests on the shores of the Red Sea was the Italian.⁹² The designs and the processes for the acquisition of Beilul and Massaua, the preservation of the Raheita protectorate,⁹³ the expansion towards the hinterland for the elimination of all possible threats (Egyptians, locals but mostly French) was Italy's response to the French advances in Obock (occupation of Angar, Ras Ali) and to the British policy of expanding to the finest locations of the coastline.⁹⁴ As far as Zeila is concerned, the Italians claimed that criminal raids by local tribes had been carried out against an Italian expeditionary mission in 1873 gave them cause to advance into the area. Ten years later the area came under the control of the British in an attempt to "rescue" it from the lurking French danger. For the same reason London urged Rome to acquire Beilul.⁹⁵ On 16 November 1884 Rome reached to an agreement with Cairo, after British mediation, for the capture of Beilul, and Mancini, in co-operation with the Minister of Shipping, Benedetto Brin (1833-1898) set in motion the plan for the city's occupation. The presence of Egyptian soldiers would have been a complication, with the possibility of causing an embarrassment in front of Italian and European observers, but the agreement with Cairo and the Egyptians' subsequent departure averted such an

⁹⁰ Rainero, *La questione di Assab*, pp. 24-25.

⁹¹ British co-operation meant to Rome cordial relations, territorial benefits and limitation of the French peril. See Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, pp. 164-165.

⁹² Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XVII-XVIII, (Rome, 1994), p. 564.

⁹³ The defence of this region from Egyptian or French machinations was deemed as imperative, see ASMAE, ASMAI, position 1/1, folder 3, Rome 3 April 1880.

⁹⁴ The two locations, might not have had great commercial value but their occupation was the "government's duty" to "protect national colonies" and to satisfy the "national sentiment". The occupations in question had to take place at the appropriate time, i.e., immediately after the withdrawal of the Egyptian troops. See *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 430.

eventuality. One hundred marines landed from the warship "Castelfidardo" and captured the city without incident on 25 January 1885.⁹⁶

Beilul, however, was not enough to satisfy the Italian ambitions. The murder of the explorer Bianchi in October 1884 and the threatening French presence in the region stirred the press and public opinion's interest in the region.⁹⁷ The strategy of establishing a coastal maritime and commercial base was being replaced by a more expansionist, militaristic policy which aimed to take as much territory as possible and move into the inland territories.⁹⁸ The Italians, wishing to make both Zeila and Harar their dominions, inevitably clashed with the French ambitions.⁹⁹ At the time the two provinces were considered, with a dose of exaggeration and enthusiasm, richer "than California and Australia" and pillars for the establishment of "a great colonial empire which would be based on the migration and the increase of the white race population and the creation with it of new Italian centres, similar to those of the British in Canada and Australia."¹⁰⁰ Mancini, after failing to secure the two regions diplomatically in November 1884, raised the issue again and in the following year, he extracted British consent to a possible Italian occupation in the event that the Porte acquiesced. Ultimately, the second attempt also came to nothing with Zeila and Harar passing under British and Ethiopian jurisdiction respectively.¹⁰¹

Britain, alarmed by the French captures of Ras Ali and Angar, in September 1884 suggested to the government of the Sultan the occupation of the territories that the Egyptians were already evacuating since August. The French conquests south of Assab naturally put Rome on alert. The decision to intervene quickly and decisively to pre-empt some unpleasant surprise on behalf of Paris was reached.¹⁰² The refusal or the inability of the Porte to occupy the coast, the withdrawal of the Egyptian garrisons, and the reluctance of the British to further commit themselves in the region bred fears that perhaps another Power would take advantage of the favourable circumstances.¹⁰³ Some Italians saw taking this opportunity to expand as essential, both as a matter of prestige and a matter of Assab's security. London, as revealed by the proposal that it had addressed to Istanbul, would prefer that neither the threatening France nor the ambitious Italy further solidified themselves in the Red Sea.¹⁰⁴ Since the Ottomans were unable to assert themselves there due to a lack of means and resources, Britain then favoured Italy, a state which did not constitute a threat, and

⁹⁶ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 185.

⁹⁷ Naturally some expansionist circles cannot be equated and identified as the representatives of the entire Italian population. Furthermore, the newspapers could certainly not rouse the interest of 30 million Italians considering that their circulation then did not exceed 500,000 copies. See *Ibid.*, p. 180.

⁹⁸ Giglio, *L'impresa di Massawa*, p. 74.

⁹⁹ Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 166.

¹⁰⁰ Zaghi, *La conquista dell'Africa*, p. 206.

¹⁰¹ Giglio, *L'impresa di Massawa*, pp. 137-157. Harar was captured by Menelik's forces on January 9 1887, see Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 221.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁰³ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XVII-XVIII, (Rome, 1994), p. 451.

¹⁰⁴ Giglio, *L'impresa di Massawa*, p. 21.

whose interests, in addition, served and coincided with its own. On the opposite end, Rome put into practice its expansionary designs strengthened and encouraged by the British support. Thus a close Italo-British co-operation was born which, as it has been seen, was extended to a number of issues.¹⁰⁵ The British Foreign Minister declared to the Italian ambassador to London, Salone Costantino Nigra (1828-1907): "the British government does not want to occupy the port of Massaua in the Red Sea. It does not want to leave it in the hands of barbarians or to the discretion of a rival state. It proposed or it will propose to Turkey, a sovereign power, to capture it. If Turkey runs into difficulties, would Italy be able to occupy it itself?"¹⁰⁶ As Egypt was not in a position to guarantee the safety of the European citizens in Africa, Mancini, under the pretext of the explorer Bianchi's murder implemented the plan of capturing Massaua to "raise the prestige and the supremacy of the Italian flag in those waters."¹⁰⁷ British consent had been already secured on 22 December 1884. Public opinion was emotionally charged¹⁰⁸ and the Press equated the Italian soldiers en route to the Red Sea with the one thousand Garibaldians that landed in Marsala of Sicily on 11 May 1860.¹⁰⁹ The stage had been set.

The contingent of 805 soldiers under the supervision of Colonel Tancredi Saletta (1840-1909) supposedly had the mission to reinforce the garrison of Assab. Casting off from Naples and stopping over at Messina, from where it picked up the experienced explorer Cecchi, and thereafter at British held Suakin, the force sailed to Assab. Just before the fleet approached the Italian colony, the orders were changed and it was commanded to sail to Massaua. The Italian government acted under a cloak of secrecy to avoid the reactions of rival Powers. It also acted hastily and unorganized as the mission sailed without interpreters and maps of the area. When the Italians eventually landed at Massaua, the British authorities provided Saletta with a map of the region and pointed out the Egyptian positions, greatly facilitating his task.¹¹⁰ Encouraged by the British support, the Italians informed the Deputy commander of the Egyptian forces in Massaua that any resistance was futile. On 6 February Admiral

¹⁰⁵ Granville conversing with ambassador Nigra made known that Britain would have no objections to a potential Italian occupation of Massaua, Zoula and Beilul. See *Ibid.*, p. 43. Furthermore, the capture of Massaua "is not a service offered by Italy to Britain but Britain's mark of friendship to Italy". See *Ibid.*, p. 60.

¹⁰⁶ ASMAE, ASMAI, position 2/1, folder 1, n. 653. London, 20 October 1884.

¹⁰⁷ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 179. Mancini, claimed that the mission had a twofold role. Hence besides the self-evident prestige, the Italians were going to Africa to undertake "studies and reconnaissance" in order to discover "the means for an exemplary punishment of the perpetrators who murdered Bianchi". See Giglio, *L'impresa di Massawa*, p. 76.

¹⁰⁸ The agitated crowd amassed in Naples to see off the Italian soldiers was joyfully chanting slogans such as "hurrah the king" and "hurrah the army" while bands were playing music. See "La Partenza della Spedizione", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 14, Sunday 18, January 1885, pp. 1-2. Ten years later the exact same scenes were unfolded in Naples, when the Italian troops were boarding ships en route to the Adwa disaster. See ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/7, folder 50, n. 98, Rome 26 December 1895.

¹⁰⁹ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 432.

¹¹⁰ For further information about the scarcity of supplies, the ominous conditions and first practical difficulties of the Italian mission in the aftermath of the capture of Massaua, see Stato Maggiore dell'Esercito-Ufficio Storico, *Tancredi Saletta a Massaua (memoria, relazione, documenti)*, (Rome, 1987).

Caimi stated: "The Italian government, a friend of Britain, Turkey, Egypt and not any less of Abyssinia ordered me to proceed to the occupation of Massaua's centre." Saletta was instructed by Rome to avoid any diplomatic misunderstanding or clashes and to collaborate with the local authorities.¹¹¹ The occupation was completed under the passive hostility of the Egyptians. The matter was temporarily settled by using the model of the dual ownership (triple-if the Ottoman suzerainty is taken into account) with the grotesque sight of hoisting two different national flags in the town, the Egyptian in the Egyptian camp and the Italian in the governor's palace. It is indeed difficult to find in the history of colonialism an event so inglorious and so manipulated by another Power.¹¹² Britain had directed the episode from start to finish, having offered Rome a region which did not belong to it, mediating diplomatically, proposing the regime of dual ownership and after the end of the operations reassuring and assuaging the Ottoman protests.

The port of Massaua, was considered the gateway to the mainland, the site that whoever was seeking the sovereignty or the imposition of a protectorate on Ethiopia, had to control. The city's strategic position which was further enhanced and amplified by the later British withdrawal from Sudan and it could be used to actively penetrate economically the hinterland. Its capture therefore, caused strong reactions on the part of the Great Powers and Istanbul. The latter handled the matter as it had handled earlier Anglo-French conquests in the area of the Red Sea, i.e., by making representations and protesting officially.¹¹³ Without the requisite military force to support its demands, its protests were not taken into account by the British and Italian diplomats. When the Italian expansion engulfed neighbouring Arafali too, on 10 April 1885, the Ottomans again dispatched official protests but to no avail. Granville argued that the responsibility burdened the government of the Sultan because it had rejected the British proposal of replacing the withdrawing Egyptians with Ottoman troops. In a climate of distrust and concern bolstered by rumours and the proclamations of the Press, the Ottomans feared that after Beilul and Massaua they would lose Tripolitania as well. The Italians reassuringly stated that they respected the rights of the Ottomans in the region, that they acted in the Red Sea region for peace and security reasons and that they had no intention to challenge the authority of the Sultan. In reality they did exactly the opposite. Italy had learned "the methods of the imperialism" from the other Powers.¹¹⁴

The threat to the Ottoman integrity and the close Anglo-Italian co-operation alarmed Berlin. In the event of a war between Britain and Russia, an extremely likely eventuality at the time due to their Asian antagonism, Italy's position would be

¹¹¹ ASMAE, ASMAI, position 2/1, folder 3, Rome 6 February 1885.

¹¹² Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 185-186.

¹¹³ The Porte was demanding the withdrawal of the Italian troops and was unable to "tolerate other Powers defending order and peacefulness in its territories." See *Ibid.*, p. 193. In addition, it had officially granted the port to the Egyptians with an agreement in 1866. See Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali*, p. 62.

¹¹⁴ Giglio, *L'impresa di Massawa*, pp. 100-101.

delicate. If London asked for Italian assistance Rome had to participate in the dispute dragging along its German and Austrian allies in a bloody and undesirable war against Russia.¹¹⁵ Bismarck, displeased by the fact that the Italians not only did not consult him before they acted but did not even notify him of their intentions, said on the matter: "Italy's action may threaten Ottoman integrity and European peace."¹¹⁶ Perhaps the greatest concern of Vienna and Berlin was the weakening of the Italian forces in Europe and consequently of the Triple Alliance's military force due to Rome's African adventures.¹¹⁷ In Austria-Hungary, the only ones who interpreted the Italian actions in a positive light were those that wanted the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire in order to forward Austrian territorial expansion farther east, towards Thessaloniki.¹¹⁸ Paris, as it was coveting Massaua, supported the Ottoman requests, supposedly respecting the sovereign rights of the Sultan and in co-operation with Russia called for the issue to be resolved with an international conference, which would examine in its entirety the issue Egypt-Suez Canal-Red Sea and would have as its primary objective the removal of Britain from Egypt.¹¹⁹

Rome's alliance with Vienna was sufficient cause to justify the hostile attitude of Saint Petersburg towards Italy's African campaign. According to some researchers Russia sought to impose a "religious protectorate in Ethiopia", a plan that took a blow after the occupation of Massaua.¹²⁰ Russian envoys had been striving to prove that the Orthodox and Coptic Christianity had narrow, trivial differences.¹²¹ In the context of this policy Saint Petersburg dispatched to the Ethiopian court a religious-military mission under the military officer Nicolaj Ivanovic Acinov in 1885. The Russian interest in Ethiopia was said to go back to the early 18th century. This interest gradually amalgamated in religious initiatives during emperor Yohannes's reign and reached its apogee when Acinov sought a suitable point to establish a Russian colony in the Red Sea region, only to be obstructed by London and Paris.¹²² Actually it was the Ethiopians that proposed the Russian installation in the Danakil province, seeking out diplomatic and material support against the European encirclement.¹²³

¹¹⁵ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XVII-XVIII, (Rome, 1994), p. 723.

¹¹⁶ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 194.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 193. The German newspaper *Kreuz Zeitung* inveighed against the Italian policy in Africa by noting the following: "The adventures will cost money and men to Italy, men that should be ready for war in Europe. Europe is being put in danger because the Italians want Tripolitania and for this they help the English [...]" See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XVII-XVIII, (Rome, 1994), p. 762.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 696. Italy could count merely on the British support. Every other Great Power was hostile to Italy's African plans. See "Bollettino Politico", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 99, Friday 1, May 1885, p. 1.

¹¹⁹ Giglio, *impresa di Massawa*, p. 110.

¹²⁰ Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali*, p. 61.

¹²¹ Augusto Salimbeni, *Crispi e Menelich nel diario inedito del conte Augusto Salimbeni*, ed. Carlo Zaghi, (Turin, 1956), pp. 132-133. The Ethiopians were too devoted to their creed to be influenced by Russian, Swedish, Italian or French missionaries. See Ferdinando Martini, *Nell'Africa Italiana*, (Milano, 1998), pp. 87-88.

¹²² Carlo Conti Rossini, *Italia ed Etiopia. Dal Trattato d'Uccialli alla Battaglia di Adua*, (Rome, 1935), p. 107.

¹²³ Ibid., pp. 133-134.

In the above equation the Ethiopian factor has to be considered too. Mancini did not give particular importance to the protests of the local emperor, Yohannes, because he considered that the Ethiopians preferred being neighbours to the Italians, rather than the Egyptians. In any event, the "barbarian" Ethiopians would never be in a position to threaten a "modern European nation".¹²⁴ Ethiopian rights upon Massaua had been recently secured with the Hewitt treaty (after the British envoy who drafted it), on 3 June 1884, between Ethiopia, Egypt and Britain. According to the contents of the treaty, Emperor Yohannes would occupy Sanhit and Kassala, in today's Sudan, and would secure his country's replenishment from the single port in the area still free, that of Massaua.¹²⁵ Ethiopia in exchange ought to facilitate in every way the withdrawal through its territory of the Egyptian troops, which were hastily evacuating Sudan because of the Mahdist danger.¹²⁶ Rome guaranteed to respect the tripartite agreement and Ethiopian sovereignty.¹²⁷ However, by landing on the coast, the Italians were automatically violating the terms of the treaty without even informing the rightful beneficiary of the region, Ethiopia.¹²⁸ Britain, by offering the city to Italy in 1885, was the first to ignore the treaty which had been signed on its own initiative just a year before.

Finally, discontent and protests about the Italian establishment in Massaua came from a rather unexpected direction. The fact that Greek ship owners and traders were operating successfully in Eastern Africa should not cause surprise.¹²⁹ The lawlessness and the lack of a strong authority in the Red Sea during the previous centuries favoured Greek business activities, a fact which changed after 1885 causing

¹²⁴ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 195.

¹²⁵ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 428.

¹²⁶ Giglio, *L'impresa di Massawa*, p. 164. When the British conquered Egypt, they inherited the Egyptian dominion of Sudan together with all its intractable problems. From 1870 Sudan was in constant turmoil because of the activity and the preaching of a religious leader, the self-proclaimed Mahdi (Allah Muhammad Ahmad bin Abd 1845-1885). As Mahdi was gaining a loyal following and influence, the Egyptians, rulers of a large part of Sudanese territory, decided to arrest him and to stifle his nationalist and religious revolution. In 1883 and 1884, however, their forces suffered successive debacles at Kasgil and at El Teb respectively and the Egyptian position in Eastern Africa became even more precarious. After 1882 the British, from their new position at Cairo, tried to enforce order and to rescue the thousands of Egyptian soldiers who were still in Sudan under siege in their camps and forts from the rebellious crowd. In an effort to contain the crisis in the south they entrusted the experienced General Charles George Gordon (1833-1885) with the demanding mission of defending Khartoum in January 1885. The heroic defence he put up during the siege of the city and his death caused emotion and grief all across Europe. In Italy the idea of a campaign to rescue civilization from barbarity and fanaticism began to mature, a scheme that was used to justify the Italian presence in Red Sea. In the next years Sudan came under the control of the Mahdists and became a source of turbulence and peril for all of Eastern Africa. See Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali*, pp. 59-60. For Mahdi's revolution see Giampiero Carocci, *L'età dell'imperialismo*, (Bologna, 1979), pp. 36-37.

¹²⁷ ASMAE, ASMAI, position, 2/2, folder 10, Rome, 7 January 1886.

¹²⁸ ASMAE, ASMAI, position 36/11, folder 91, Massaua, 5 April 1890.

¹²⁹ "Except for the Greek there is no other European who has a capability equal to that of the Arab and the Indian for street trade." See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XII, (Rome, 1987), p. 737.

the dissatisfaction of the Theodoros Deligiannis' (1820-1905) government.¹³⁰ The Greek Foreign Minister, Stefanos Dragoumis (1842-1923), asked the Italian government for explanations about the abolition of the capitulations' regime, the new legal status and the jurisdiction in the area.¹³¹ The diplomatic and legal representation of the Greeks but also of other Europeans, who were operating in Eastern Africa, had been undertaken, until recently, by French diplomats. The French, taking advantage of the Greek government's inability to intervene, had or were alleged to have the responsibility of the local Greeks' legal protection. Nevertheless, the Italian authorities could no longer "accept from the consul of France a request in favour of the Greek citizens."¹³² They also wanted direct co-operation with the Greek side to cultivate friendly relations and were refusing to accept "the protection of Greek interests by the commissioner of France". When the *Efimeris* (Greek newspaper) inveighed against the Italian action in Massaua with "vile attacks" and using a "very hostile" vocabulary, the Italians found themselves in an awkward position. The Italian predominance in the area filled with "envy" the French, the Greeks and the Russians who immediately put into practice their intrigues in Ethiopia!¹³³ The absence of an official representative of Greece hampered co-operation and made every issue, even of minor importance, difficult to resolve.¹³⁴ Despite the French involvement the Greek government after an "outstanding" exchange of diplomatic notes and in accordance with the provisions of the Berlin conference, accepted the Italian sovereignty in the new colony.¹³⁵

Because of the explosive situation in Sudan under revolt, the idea of intervening on that front too started to mature in the Italian parliament. Italy by helping the British in the war against Mahdi could conquer locations of the Sudanese mainland and expand its dominance.¹³⁶ King Umberto, apropos of this, spoke of "the great benefit of a prompt intervention in Sudan alongside the British".¹³⁷ Of course the British had yet to formally suggest an allied Anglo-Italian co-operation for the relief of Egyptian garrisons in Sudan. The only one who mentioned such a campaign was the British consul in Rome John Saville Lumley (1818-1896), influencing public opinion and Italy's political leadership. Through a bilateral alliance Rome would

¹³⁰ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/1, folder 4, n. 1217. Rome, 20 August 1888.

¹³¹ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/1, folder 4, n. 1258. Athens, 30 August 1888.

¹³²ASMAE, ASMAI, position 2/4, folder 24, n. 2651, Rome, 23 June 1888.

¹³³ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 436.

¹³⁴ The Greeks, were reluctant to pay taxes in Massaua too, refused to comply with the new Italian tax measures and for this reason two of them were threatened with removal and eviction from the city. See ASMAE, ASMAI, position 2/4, folder 24, n. 3735, Rome, 27 August 1888.

¹³⁵ Carrara, *L'esercito*, p. 110.

¹³⁶Giglio, *L'impresa di Massawa*, p. 116. Italy did not have the slightest interest to defend in Sudan. The country was targeted by those individuals, who in their confused ambition were seeking opportunities for action and adventure, imitating the other colonialists. At the opposite end there were the more grounded and cautious, who were examining with scepticism such kind of actions. See Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 426.

¹³⁷Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 184.

ensure British friendship and guarantee its interests in the Mediterranean and Africa without additionally compromising its obligations to the Triple Alliance. Thus, Mancini ordered Nigra to communicate to Granville that "if Britain launches an appeal asking for our co-operation, we are ready to agree without any gain."¹³⁸ The Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs was dreaming about expanding beyond Massaua and conquering Sudan, using the excuse of providing a "humanitarian act."¹³⁹ Perhaps regretting his mistakes in 1882, and sensing the press's pressure, he was trying to approach Egypt and the Mediterranean from another route, from the south.¹⁴⁰ The conquest and the elimination of the Mahdist danger, imposition of a protectorate in Ethiopia, and expansion towards Somalia seemed in his eyes, feasible eventualities.¹⁴¹ The only detail that Mancini did not calculate was that the British parliament never sent an invitation to Rome for co-operation in Sudan and that apparently it was in no hurry to resolve the critical situation there.¹⁴² The British refusal disappointed and cancelled Mancini's ambitious plans to replace the Egyptians in Sudan and capture Khartoum or Kassala.¹⁴³ Italian benevolence if not servitude came to nothing.¹⁴⁴ The British government by ordering the evacuation of Sudan, through the House of Lords act on 11 April 1885, was rendering it *res nullius*, maintaining the possibility, in due course, to attempt its recapture.¹⁴⁵ In 1884-1885, Granville and Gladstone, rather than seeing the Italians consolidate themselves there threatening Britain's position in Egypt, preferred to abandon Sudan and the Egyptian soldiers to the mercy of the Mahdists.¹⁴⁶ Mancini, at any rate, did not give up nurturing the hope that sooner or later the British would ultimately seek the Italian collaboration.¹⁴⁷

Sufficient information was provided above, to allow a first attempt at interpreting Italian colonialism and its contradictions Italian colonialism, violated the

¹³⁸ Lumley proposed sending 5,000-6,000 men at Suakin in support of the trapped in Khartoum, Gordon with the city's joint occupation as the likely prize. See Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, pp. 116-122.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 124-127. Indicative of the ambient atmosphere was Crispi's statement in August of 1890: "All our efforts must be directed to ensure to Italy, to the future generations, a vast empire on the shores of the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean such as those that Britain learned to forge in all the parts of the world". See Zaghi, *La conquista dell'Africa*, p. 522.

¹⁴⁰ Angelo Gianni, *Italia e Inghilterra alle porte del Sudan: La spedizione di Massaua (1885)*, (Pisa, 1946), pp. 15-16.

¹⁴¹ "What is twenty million annually compared to such a prize?" See Scarfoglio, *Viaggio in Abissinia*, pp. 54-64. Moreover, on 3 April 1884 one of the deputies exclaimed during the parliament's session: "Can we, a Great Power, remain completely indifferent before the colonial expansion of other Powers?" See Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, p. 425.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 434.

¹⁴³ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 184.

¹⁴⁴ Giovanni Battista Penne, *Per l'Italia africana, studio critico*, (Rome, 1906), pp. 610-611.

¹⁴⁵ Chiala, *La spedizione di Massaua*, p. 229.

¹⁴⁶ Giglio, *L'impresa di Massawa*, p. 135.

¹⁴⁷ Zaghi, *La conquista dell'Africa*, p. 239. On a later date Catalani, the Italian ambassador to London was elaborating a plan, according to which Italian troops would reside in Egyptian camps and not in the midst of Massaua's tropical conditions. See ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/4, folder 24, n. 327/166, London, 6 March 1888.

self-determination principle, which Mancini had zealously supported just a few years before.¹⁴⁸ When he was reasonably accused of contradiction, since his proclamations were hardly reminiscent of the law professor who until recently was delivering speeches in favour of the peoples' independence and self-determination, he highlighted the existence of two colonial systems. He disassociated the old colonialism of the Spanish and Portuguese, which was based on murders, devastations and religious persecutions, from the colonialism of the second half of the 19th century, which had a "completely different nature". Thus he defined the modern relationship between colonialist and colonized as "protection". This relationship was "legitimate in the international community, just as the relationship of protection is legal in private law: protection of the incompetent due to age or also because of intellectual weakness."¹⁴⁹ In addition, he viewed the colonies as a solution to the emigration problem given that "deceit and sometimes death" was awaiting Italian immigrants in distant lands under foreign governments.¹⁵⁰ Although in March 1883 he had argued that "our national unity is too young to be able to cause, even when justice favours us, any sort of danger and opportunism" and that "Italy owes its existence to a great principle, the principle of non-intervention", by 1885 he was a leading voice in processing and put forward an expansionist rhetoric based on a civilizing mission, so useful as an alibi for the colonialists. In theory, the Italian Foreign Minister was agreeing to the establishment of commercial colonies as markets for the Italian products that would serve as an opportunity to bring "peace and civilization" activities to completion.¹⁵¹ In practice though he never prevented territorial expansion in Africa. Instead, as has been seen, he backed behind the scenes, as well as diplomatically, every kind of political or commercial expansionist activity, such as Bianchi's and Rubattino's.¹⁵²

Mancini daydreaming that he would turn African territories into Italian dominions "without reactions and clashes, without side effects and without serious sacrifices", laid the foundations of an extensive colonial programme.¹⁵³ Some of his objectives were Sudan, the coastline of the Red Sea, Zeila and Harar in the African interior and Somalia.¹⁵⁴ Perhaps it this was not a contradiction on Mancini's part, but rather his plan all along, the implementation of which only awaited more favourable

¹⁴⁸ Mancini, influenced by the liberal ideas of Mazzini, interpreted the principle of nationality as the "reasonable basis of human rights", see Emilio Gentile, *La Grande Italia, the myth of the nation in the 20th century*, trans. S. Dingee and J. Pudney, (Madison, 2009), p. 23.

¹⁴⁹ Tullio Scovazzi, *Assab, Massaua, Uccialli, Adua, gli strumenti giuridici del primo colonialismo italiano*, (Turin, 1996), pp. 96-97.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 95.

¹⁵¹ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 123-124.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 171.

¹⁵³ Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale*, p. 95.

¹⁵⁴ Giglio, *L'impresa di Massawa*, p. 51. Later on, the Italians set their sights on Cameroon, Tanzania and other African regions, see Piero Foscari, *Le aspirazioni coloniali dell'Italia*, (Rome, 1919), pp. 3-7. For the designs on the French Djibouti, see D'Agostino Orsini, *Le "aspirazioni Nazionali" Gibuti*, (Milan, 1939).

conditions.¹⁵⁵ The conditions matured and the conjunctures ultimately presented themselves. The triggering factors included: a) the vacuum of power in Sudan and the withdrawal of the Egyptians, b) the outbreak of the colonial antagonism with Paris, after the fiasco of Tunisia, c) the European frenzy to acquire colonies, d) the never-ending quest for prestige, e) the ambitions of King Umberto, f) the interests of the military and of the industrialists, g) the flourishing economy "finanza allegra", more illusive than real, h) the assassination of Italian explorers, i) the pressure exerted by the Press and the public opinion, j) the violence against Italian citizens in Tripolitania. All of the above prompted Mancini to implement his expansionist plans between October 1884 and January 1885.¹⁵⁶ When he had refused the British proposal of collaboration in Egypt, he had done so in the name of humanism and because of his aversion towards rash adventures. Two years later he himself pulled the strings for the capture of Massawa and became the warmest supporter of Italian expansion in Eastern Africa, in such a way that "the start of Italian imperialism bears a name: Mancini."¹⁵⁷ After so many failures and lessons he had become an outstanding student of the British masters, dedicated to the "Grande politica coloniale" and convinced that Italy should not "remain alien to the magnanimous struggle" of the "civilizing mission".¹⁵⁸ Italy, because of the circumstances, decided to proceed to conquests in Africa. The Minister of Foreign Affairs invented a link between the Risorgimento and the "civilizing mission", and deliberately misinterpreted the principle of ethnic groups, so that it would serve the purposes of the Italian expansion, and set the theoretical bases for what was to come: "Not conquerors, not teachers, not innovators but friends and aid givers...this is our programme for Assab."¹⁵⁹ Assab and Massawa would pave the way for further conquests in Somalia, in Ethiopia, in Harar, in Aussa.¹⁶⁰ The plan of the colonial expansion had been already etched out.

In 1885 an unprecedented event took place, which in conjunction with the opening of the Suez Canal would constitute the catalyst, the decisive factor of Africa's partition. With the occasion of the Berlin conference (November 1884-February 1885) all the European powers occupied themselves with a colonial race for the acquisition of coastlines and islands until then overlooked.¹⁶¹ Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, Russia, the United States, the Ottoman Empire, Germany, the Netherlands, Britain, Italy and France participated in the conference with the stated aim of normalizing the status of Congo and regulating the shipping on the Congo River. During the proceedings of the conference the principle of the effective possession (*Uti Possidetis*) was adopted according to which,

¹⁵⁵Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 172.

¹⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 175.

¹⁵⁷Giglio, *L'impresa di Massawa*, pp. 14-16.

¹⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 78.

¹⁵⁹Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 122.

¹⁶⁰The December 1888 amity and commerce treaty between the Sultan of Aussa and the Italian authorities transformed his region into an Italian protectorate. See *La colonia Italiana in Africa* e Francesco Crispi, *il parlamento e il paese*, (Rome, 1896), p. 83.

¹⁶¹Aldo de Jaco, *Di mal d'Africa si muore, cronaca inedita dell'unità d'Italia*, (Rome, 1972), pp. 56-57.

any state was in a position to declare an area as its colony only if it had signed treaties with the local chieftains, had raised its national flag there and was proving through policing and administration that it effectively and efficiently controlled the colony. If the colonial Power was failing to meet these obligations, the region could be claimed by someone else. As a result of the conference Portugal, Britain, France and Germany operated at such a frenetic pace in the field of colonial expansion, that nowadays there is talk of a Scramble for Africa. Italian prestige took a heavy blow when the country was not initially invited to participate in the colonial conference, as the worthless Assab did not provide sufficient cause of presence in comparison to the Powers that were empires.¹⁶²

On 1 January 1885 the newspaper *Il Diritto* argued that 1885 would be the "year of boldness" and the fate of Italy as a Great Power would be settled. Former Garibaldian Crispi said on the matter: "Italy came afterwards and wants [...] to hastily gain on Britain, France, Germany, Belgium [...] Belgium? Is it ever possible for Belgium which does not have ancient Rome in its genes to have more colonies than Italy?"¹⁶³ At least Italy was now in "the Red Sea with the force of arms and a voice that resonates again in the world that says: 'The sons of Rome are returning to an ancient sea that is their own'".¹⁶⁴ In the parliament, Deputy Attilio Brunialti (1849-1920) spoke in a similar way in June 1885: "To make it known, particularly in Africa, that there is an Italy in the world. That it knows to enforce respect for its name and interests when it is necessary and knows to do it even if it has the cost of some spilled blood even if it has the cost of other more serious sacrifices". The memory and the nostalgia of the heroic struggles during the Risorgimento encouraged an emotional support for Rome's civilizing fight against barbarity. It was only right, they thought, for the homeland of Columbus and Marco Polo¹⁶⁵ to once again become a conqueror.¹⁶⁶

There were a variety of views about expansion in Italy at the time. The "pacifist" Mancini stated on 5 April 1884: "Italy has no direct and exclusive interests of its own, but only general interests of humanitarianism and civilization", even though later on, he instigated and orchestrated the campaign to take Massaua. The alibi of fighting against barbarity with missionaries and explorations as intellectual means was ingenious.¹⁶⁷ During the 7th of May parliamentary session, when Deputy Antonio Oliva (1827-1886) defended Mancini's actions, Deputy Ruggiero Maurigi

¹⁶² Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 53. The exclusion of Italy from such an important conference caused awkwardness in Rome. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XVII-XVIII, (Rome, 1994), p. 422. After consultations and protests Italy gained a place among the colonial powers in Berlin.

¹⁶³ Randazzo, *Roma predona*, pp. 22-24.

¹⁶⁴ Surdich, "Il colonialismo italiano, l'imperialismo straccione", p. 15.

¹⁶⁵ Italy "had the honour of discovering America but lacked the strength to impose its rule on it". See Francesco Crispi, *Discorsi di politica Estera pronunciati da Francesco Crispi*, (Rome, 1892), p. 91.

¹⁶⁶ De Jaco, *Di mal d'Africa*, pp. 60-193.

¹⁶⁷ Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, pp. 150-155.

(1843-1919) claimed that "no one knows how and why we went to Massaua." Rocco de Zerbi (1843-1893) responded that Italy established itself in Massaua to "plant a picket for the future" and Crispi supplemented that if it was up to him Italy would never have occupied Massaua but since it had, it should retain it.¹⁶⁸ The organization "Cross of Savoy" appealed to Colonel Saletta "to show to those barbarians that Italy is truly civilized, that it is strong in Europe, that it is great in the world."¹⁶⁹

The initial search for commercial stations evolved into territorial expansion and this in turn into extreme militarism and insatiable appetite for conquests. Even developmental and prosperity projects were taking on a military character. The construction of an "economic railway" from Massaua towards the hinterland had, according to Mancini, "a military purpose, to facilitate the access of our soldiers to all the parts of the region, where their presence could be requested to guarantee public order."¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, military operations in Africa were considered by the Foreign Minister a useful exercise for the Italian armed forces: "Rather than absolute passivity in the thankless sluggishness of the camp [...] better to move [the army], to go outside the country, to become acquainted with other peoples, to train and to become accustomed in an useful manner to that sort of life to which, from one day to the next it could be summoned, in the service of the country." When in June 1887 the Italian army clashed with local tribes in the outskirts of the colony, Mancini, besides being a populist, proved to be a militarist as well: "The new Italian army of today, comprised of soldiers from all the provinces of the peninsula, is an army loyal to its duty and contemptuous of life not only when it comes to defending the ancestral lands, like Leonidas at Thermopylae, but also when it is about to be faithful to its duty and far away from all eyes is called to defend the honour of the flag and of the Italian arms: Our soldiers from any province are like this, they die fearless and sacrifices their lives for the homeland."¹⁷¹

The Italian military tradition, intertwined with the militaristic character of the dynasty of the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, made its reappearance in Africa in the late 19th century. It is noteworthy that Piedmont-Sardinia, having undertaken the task of Italy's unification, was often called "Prussia of the South", a characterization that also accurately depicted the primary importance that the kingdom attributed to the military. The Italian dynasty of the Sabaudi, with a dose of conceit and megalomania, was always encouraging military expenditures and the building of warships as instruments for future conquests;¹⁷² conquests that would bring glory and prestige to

¹⁶⁸ Arbib, "La questione d'Africa alla Camera Italiana", p. 226.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 176.

¹⁷⁰ Scovazzi, *Assab, Massawa, Ucciali*, p. 93.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 95-97.

¹⁷² Ottavio Barri , "Italian Imperialism: the first stage", in *the Journal of Italian History*, 2/3 (1979), p. 551. Between 1880 and 1890 the expenses for shipbuilding rose from 45 million lire to the unfathomable amount of 123 million.

the Italian crown.¹⁷³ King Umberto, the "machine gun king" (re mitraglia) passionate about his house's military tradition and ardent promoter of the expansion of the Army, saw colonialism not as an end in itself but as a way to exalt Italian prestige internationally. It is striking that his wife, Queen Margherita Maria Teresa Giovanna (1851-1926) was also an advocate of militarism, a widespread concept among the European ruling classes of the late 19th century.¹⁷⁴

Another factor which should not be taken out of the equation of Italian colonialism is the position that the Vatican held in regard to the colonial venture in Africa. The Catholic clergy, who had influence and voice, acknowledged western Christian civilization as the sole civilization on earth. Christianity, although born in the East, matured and developed in the West. Harmonized with this doctrine many Catholic missionaries, convinced of their intellectual superiority, were contemptuous of those who had not managed to reach their own cultural level. Civilization, according to them, had the right to be enforced on the savages even by force to "subjugate the coarse soul to the civility of European civilization." But not only on the savages. The entire East, even the Christian one, seemed in the eyes of the Catholics in decline, degenerate, bankrupt spiritually, morally and intellectually. The Catholic clergy, partaker of the Italian governments' ideas about the calling, espoused the ideological construct about the civilizing mission and spiritual primacy, becoming their most loyal accomplice. Despite their political differences in Italy, the state and the papacy seemed to co-operate harmonically in Africa. Missionary expeditions with the goal of proselytizing and expanding Italian influence continued unabated from 1830 up until the period of decolonization.¹⁷⁵

Putting aside theoretical schemes of a more general nature and before drawing precarious conclusions the Catholic Church's activity should be traced explicitly within this study's specific framework. The first apostolic magister of Eritrea and the person whose tenacious efforts formulated and affected decisively the colony's formal structures as well as a wide range of everyday life aspects was Michele da Carbonara (1836-1919). He not only initiated missionary activity but by closely collaborating with the colonial authorities he promoted the Italianization and the Christianization of the local masses. He assumed his position on 9 December 1894 shortly after the Propaganda Fide, the Catholic Church's council responsible for missionary work, proclaimed Eritrea an apostolic prefecture separate from the Ethiopian vicariate in which it hitherto belonged. This stratagem, a product of Crispi's negotiation with

¹⁷³ "Can dynasties live and last without the glory, without the glow, without the blood baths?" see Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 175.

¹⁷⁴ Giuseppe De Stefani, *Adua nella storia e nella leggenda. La guerra coloniale Italo-Abissina del 1895-1896 (con documenti inediti)*, v. 1, Ph.D Dissertation, University of Palermo, (Palermo, 2004), pp. 80-81.

¹⁷⁵ Fausto Fonzi, "La Chiesa cattolica e la politica coloniale" in *Fonti e problemi della politica coloniale italiana*, (Rome, 1996), pp. 440-445. For more on the relationship between western Christianity and colonialism see Robert Delavignette, *Cristianesimo e Colonialismo*, (Catania, 1961) and Massimo Marcocchi, *Colonialismo, cristianesimo e culture extraeuropee*, (Milan, 1980).

various papal representatives from December 1894 until January 1895, yielded benefits for both sides. Italy through the Vatican's recognition and co-operation made a decisive step towards the consolidation of its rule internationally. As for the latter, it broadened its spiritual authority not only in the colony but to the vast region which fell under Italian influence as well.¹⁷⁶ Under Carbonara's meticulous direction the city of Keren became the operations centre of the Eritrean mission from where he directed and oversaw the three missionary centres and the 29 chapels. He founded two orphanages, numerous educational facilities, a typography and two preparatory clerical schools in his administrative capital which was conveniently away from the interventions of the colonial governor, situated in Massaua.¹⁷⁷ Carbonara also opposed human trafficking still taking place in some parts of Ethiopia and Somalia. The first official Italian antislavery act was issued in May 1886; its first implementation took place three years later when missionaries and colonial personnel jointly undertook a series of antislavery operations. The first step towards the Italianization of Eritrea using religious means was the expulsion of the French missionaries, active in the area even before the Italian landing and supported diplomatically by Paris.¹⁷⁸ Their eviction would eradicate the confusion of the local population, discard the French influence and machinations, and promote the Italian culture and rule in the area. The government, alongside some Catholic actors who were favourable towards expansion, put forward the project of the nationalization of the religious missions in the colony. Thus, on 22 January 1895 Crispi officially expelled the French missionaries on the grounds of conspiracy, hostile propaganda and incitement of the 1894 revolt in Acchele Guzai.¹⁷⁹ In addition, their lands were confiscated by the colonial government.¹⁸⁰

Carbonara resolved to more "aggressive" tactics of proselytism in contrast to the previous lazarusist (French) methods of teaching. Many natives adopted Catholicism as a way or a tactic to gain land, privileges, and an elevated status amidst the newly established social and political order. Likewise, the Italian missionaries' sincerity can be doubted, since they resided and exercised their duties in the wealthier, fertile and economically most prominent Eritrean regions.¹⁸¹ Although the missionary proselytism was especially aggressive, and was a product of the coordinated policy to impose western social patterns upon the Eritreans, it can be argued that some measure of goodwill played a part in the series of infrastructural works.

¹⁷⁶De Stefani, *Adua nella storia e nella leggenda*, pp. 199-201.

¹⁷⁷See Uoldelul Chelati Dirar, "Collaborazione e Conflitti: Michele da Carbonara e l'organizzazione della prefettura apostolica dell'eritrea (1894-1910)", in *Quaderni Storici, La Colonia: italiani in Eritrea*, 1/2002, pp. 149-160.

¹⁷⁸ AUSSME, L-7 Eritrea, folder 132/1, n. 869, Rome, 24 September 1887.

¹⁷⁹Dirar, "Collaborazione e Conflitti ", pp. 157-158.

¹⁸⁰This policy was started by French authorities in 1891 when they expelled every Italian missionary from Tunisian soil. See De Stefani, *Adua nella storia e nella leggenda*, p. 210

¹⁸¹Ibid., pp. 169-171.

Italian colonialism will have devastating effects upon the native's social structures, traditions and beliefs. From the start, however, it did make at least token attempts to respect some of those traditions and beliefs.¹⁸² A 5 July 1882 law declared that Assab population's (Amhara-Tigre) religious beliefs and civil laws would be protected, as long as they were "compatible with Italian legislation and civilization" and did not undermine the "universal morality" and public order notions in the colony. This is considered by some a progressive act of religious tolerance. Theoretical equality and respect of the native cults ensured essentially the principle of the freedom of worship. Italian authorities preserved as far as possible the customary native laws. When the colony expanded, incorporating culturally diverse territories, the same protection was afforded to the rest of the colony's population that adhered to the Islamic law (Koran-Sunnah). Moreover, aspects of the hinterland's civil law such as the "Fetha Nagast" (King's laws) and Chebre Neghesti (King Yohannes' political constitution) were retained. Every tribe (Cumana, Maria, Beni Amer, Bogos, Mensa) practiced a distinct pattern of local organization based on its religious and political beliefs, material sufficiency, social background, economic practices and level of subsistence. Consequently, each region's customary law was maintained after subtle revisions to facilitate intra-community relations, to preserve the traditional social structures as much as possible and to promote a constructive interaction between colonizer and colonized.¹⁸³

On 30 June 1887 Mancini defended his actions to the plenary session of the parliament, stating: "We really had thought, gentlemen, that while in Europe we would not be able to raise our flag above more than one hectare of land without shedding tonnes of blood, that while in Asia there are two giants, Russia and Britain, that do not leave room for a third one, that while the Monroe doctrine does not allow any Power to set its foot in America, there is only Africa [...]"¹⁸⁴ The acquisition of colonies, at a time when the European powers were expanding insatiably all over the world, was considered an issue of security, of survival. In its attempt to find breathing space Rome had changed its policy radically. It had abandoned the independent, behind the scenes and more subtle policy of economic penetration and influence, which had failed in the Mediterranean. It was now setting in motion a policy of expansion and conquest under the auspices of an allied power, putting the search for commercial bases and markets for its products on the back burner. Besides this change of direction, the geopolitical centre of interest also shifted, from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea and from the Northern to Eastern Africa. To justify this

¹⁸² Although Italian colonialism demonstrated a certain lack of means and concrete projects, the nearly 50 year rule over the coastal tribes resulted in the alteration of their idiosyncrasy in relation to both their previous national identity and the one of the Ethiopians in the mainland. See Barbara Sorgoni, *Parole e Corpi. Antropologia, discorso giuridico e politiche sessuali interrazziali nella colonia Eritrea (1890-1941)*, (Naples, 1998), pp. 22-28.

¹⁸³ De Stefani, *Adua nella storia e nella leggenda*, pp. 178-179.

¹⁸⁴ Sergio Romano, "L'ideologia del colonialismo italiano", in *Fonti e problemi della politica coloniale italiana*, (Rome, 1996), p. 29.

switch, the "pro-Africanists" were proclaiming the strategic importance of the Red Sea for Italy, stressing that this was necessary and complementary to the Mediterranean balance and security.¹⁸⁵ In reality, as it became apparent, Rome was forced to turn to the still "free" Eastern Africa, where French rivalry seemed less pronounced and where British co-operation could yield benefits without great sacrifices, after the failures in the Mediterranean. The answer to the reasonable question as to why Italian colonialism took place at the end of the 19th century does not lie only in the manifestation of the British co-operation from 1882 onwards. Circumstances such as the opening of the Suez Canal and the colonial conference of Berlin were the catalysts which prompted all the Powers to turn to the conquest of overseas territories. Italy, always seeking to be accepted by the Powers, to have a voice and equality in European matters, had to imitate them, even if its fiscal situation and level of industrialization were not comparable to theirs.

The choices of the Foreign Minister were not applauded by all politicians. The left-wing of the parliament in particular did not wish to sacrifice the traditional Mediterranean policy and was accusing the government of betraying the ideals of the Risorgimento,¹⁸⁶ i.e. the ideals of justice, freedom and self-determination. The pointless waste of money in faraway adventures at a time when the Italian economy was in need of strengthening and reorganization, the "spirit of subordination" towards the British,¹⁸⁷ the lurking danger of a conflict with Ethiopia and the lack of confidence in the government's course of action were factors that influenced the "anti-Africanists". They would not find any usage value and were negative and pessimistic with regard to the future of the colony.¹⁸⁸ For them Italian security was not bound so self-evidently with the campaigns in Africa.¹⁸⁹ The lawyer and politician Parenzo stated after the official acquisition of Assab: "I would never want the national flag to fly over foreign territory without the willingness of the population that resides there."¹⁹⁰ The socialist politician Andrea Costa (1851-1910) after the first Italian casualties in Africa exclaimed the historic "not a man, not a penny" for the African

¹⁸⁵ Barri , *Italian Imperialism*, pp 547-548. The Italian public opinion was expecting the carrying out of a landing in Tripolitania. Instead of that Mancini was drawing up plans for Eastern Africa. See Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 178.

¹⁸⁶ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 65.

¹⁸⁷ Despite the "moral" satisfaction of capturing Massaua, Mancini did not manage to avoid criticism that Italian colonialism had simply become a kind of "British sub-imperialism". See Romano, *L'ideologia del colonialismo italiano*, p. 27. The French press also severely criticized the Italian violation of the Sultan's African rights described Rome's endeavour as a "tipping policy" subsisting on British benevolence. See, "Bollettino Politico", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 27, Wednesday 4, February 1885, p. 1.

¹⁸⁸ Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 215.

¹⁸⁹ According to some dissidents the "colonial delirium" and "the craze for colonies and barbarian possessions, we owe it to the southerners, who having always been slaves of the one and the other, are now looking forward to torment anyone in any way without ever having independence or regional government [...]", see *Ibid.*, pp. 175-176.

¹⁹⁰ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 122.

venture. Another Deputy maintained that the "Mediterranean is our goal and must be the sole concern of the Italians."¹⁹¹

Mancini, on his part, was presenting the mission to the Red Sea as an excellent opportunity for Italy. The civilizing mission there was a continuation and an integral part of the European policy: "[...] the real and the important objective of the Italian policy must be the Mediterranean. But why do you not want to acknowledge that in the Red Sea, the nearest to the Mediterranean, we can find the keys to the latter?"¹⁹² This historic expression allows for two interpretations. Italy through the British co-operation in the Red Sea would elicit the protection and the guarantees it required to safeguard its interests in the Mediterranean. Perhaps with the word "keys" he meant that Italy would unlock the Mediterranean door by occupying the Red Sea shores, Sudan, Egypt and ultimately Tripolitania.¹⁹³ Despite the reassuring nature of Mancini's statements, Italian soldiers were regularly sent to distant areas on the altar of the glorious mission for the Mediterranean and Civilization.¹⁹⁴ With completely insufficient preparation and means, without colonial-tropical experience, and without adequate supplies, the Italian troops were sent to an environment hostile in every aspect, to be sacrificed for the illusion of power and the deceptive vision of a colonial empire harboured by the government and some classes of Italian society.

Despite the difficulties, the delays and the reactions, by 1885 Italy was in possession of its first colony (*colonia primogenita*). While Assab remained under the direction of the royal commissaries, Massaua, initially under a mixed Italo-Egyptian administration and situated among hostile powers had to be directed in a more firm and assertive fashion.¹⁹⁵ With the royal ordinance of 5 November 1885 the general commander of the Italian troops in Africa assumed full command of every juridical and administrative authority in the colony. In regard to his military duties he had to answer to the War Ministry; any other issue had to be approved by the Foreign Ministry in Rome. In the following months, the naval command office was instituted in the city and a civil, a commercial and a penal court were established. When the colony found itself under a state of emergency due to the ongoing war with Ethiopia and distressed after a woeful debacle in January 1887, the balance of power shifted towards the War Ministry. The Italian government recognized the critical condition and bestowed the Supreme Commander with even more extraordinary powers with

¹⁹¹Giglio, *L'impresa di Massawa*, p. 77.

¹⁹²Romano, *L'ideologia del colonialismo italiano*, p. 27.

¹⁹³Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, pp. 117-118.

¹⁹⁴Marina Pieretti, "Ripercussioni interne ai fatti di Sahati e Dogali dalle carte della Questura di Roma (Gennaio-Febbraio 1887)" in *Fonti e problemi della politica coloniale italiana*, (Rome, 1996), p 336.

¹⁹⁵The socialist newspaper *La Tribuna* criticized and noted the administrative chaos of Massaua, see *La Tribuna*, "La nostra situazione a Massaua (note riassuntive)", Sunday 23 August 1885, n. 231.

the 17 February 1887 ordinance.¹⁹⁶ This chain of events was repeated during the escalation of the Italo-Ethiopian conflict in 1895-1896.¹⁹⁷

The area between Massaua and Assab to the south, on the borders with the French Djibouti, 1,000-kilometres long, was now being controlled by Rome.¹⁹⁸ Under its rule had been placed the tribes Saho, Dankali, Baria, Kunama and other, of various religious doctrines, an amalgam which numbered 200,000 indigenous peoples in 1890.¹⁹⁹ The Italian dominions were officially designated as "Italian Possessions and Protectorates in the Red Sea" and they consisted of the Assab possession, the Massaua possession and the protectorates over Habab, Danakil and Raheita.²⁰⁰ On 1 January 1890, by royal decree number 6,592, the old and the new Italian dominions in the Red Sea were united, establishing the New Eritrea colony. According to this the colony had an autonomous budget and administration; the governor controlled all the military forces in the Red Sea and was being assisted by three Italian advisers at the recommendation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who were acting on royal mandate. These advisers covered internal affairs, finances and public works, and agriculture and commerce. The governor was answerable to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with regard to the civilian administration, to the War ministry for military matters and to the Maritime ministry for nautical issues. The January 1890 ordinance, replaced ostensibly the previous military oriented administration with a more conventional, civil one. Nevertheless, in practice, every colonial governor up to Ferdinando Martini (1841-1928), originated from the army. Specifically, the first colonial governor from 1 January 1890 until 30 June 1890, was General Alessandro Baldassarre Orero (1841-1914)²⁰¹; from 30 June 1890 until 28 February 1892 General and Left wing Deputy Antonio Gandolfi (1835-1902); from 28 February 1892 until 22 February 1896 General Oreste Baratieri (1841-1901); from February 1896 until 16 December 1897 General Antonio Baldissera (1838-1917) and finally, at least in regard to this study, Deputy and Minister Martini, from December 1897 until to 25 March 1907. Before the formal establishment of the colony in January 1890, the city of Massaua was administered by the following commanders: officer Tancredi Saletta (1840-1909) from 5 February 1885 until 14 November 1885, major general Carlo

¹⁹⁶ AUSSME, D4 ERITREA, folder 41, Rome, April 17 1887. The Commander concentrated every vestige of politico-administrative authority in his hands and was given liberty to proclaim a state of emergency in any part of the colony and impose the military penal code at will.

¹⁹⁷ Marinucci, "L'Amministrazione centrale coloniale", pp.7-8.

¹⁹⁸ The Italian flag was planted in Arafali on 10 April, in the Dahalac or Dahlac islands on 8 June, in Edd on 23 June, in Madir or Mader on the 24th and in Hawakil on the 26th. Two days later the protectorate over the coast of Machanile was proclaimed, see AUSSME, D4 ERITREA, folder 45, n. 193, July 9 1885.

¹⁹⁹ Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali*, pp. 94-97.

²⁰⁰ Romain H. Rainero, *Pietro Toselli un peveragnese nella storia: della colonizzazione dell'Eritrea all'Amba Alagi*, (Peveragno, 1996), p. 26.

²⁰¹ Governor Orero submitted his resignation since his discords with Crispi and the diplomat count Antonelli (Pietro Antonelli 1853-1901) were unbridgeable. See Antonello F. M. Biagini, *La Questione d'Oriente Del 1875-'78 Nei Documenti Dell'Archivio Dell'Ufficio Storico Dello Stato Maggiore Esercito*, (Rome, 1978), p. 366.

Genè (1836-1890) from 15 December 1885 until 18 March 1887, Saletta again from 18 March 1887 until 10 November 1887, lieutenant general Sandro Asinari di San Marzano (1830-1906) from 10 November 1887 until 1888, Baldissera until 20 December 1889 and Orero from 20 December 1889 until 31 December 1890.

On the day that the colony was officially founded, "a special budget of the Eritrea colony" was presented to the parliament.²⁰² Public safety, penal system, public education and commerce were all upgraded and experienced a relative growth. Despite the colony's financial straits, the government put forward a series of construction works aiming at the development of the region's infrastructure and communication network²⁰³ such as the construction of bridges, the expansion of the road network,²⁰⁴ the engineering of the railway line between Massaua and Saati²⁰⁵ and the erection of administrative offices, public edifices and instructional facilities. The 27 kilometre long Massaua-Saati railway was constructed between October 1887 and March 1888 and cost almost 3 million lire. The project was realized as a means of promoting Italian commerce and authority to the internal regions, but mostly for military reasons and with the funds of the 1887-8 "military reinforcements in the coast of the Red Sea" budget. Despite the projected designs for another railway in 1894, financial strains and the bellicose situation postponed any analogous initiative until 1907.²⁰⁶ State sponsored schools were founded in Massaua, Cheren, Asmara, Assab and Archico whereas church operated schools were erected in Belesa, Gheleb, Zazega, Asmara and Monculo.²⁰⁷ As expected the main priority of the teachers' and clerics' educational program was the instruction of the Italian language to the young natives willing to embrace the recently imposed Italian rule.²⁰⁸ Elementary schools under the direction of the nuns of the Order of Saint Anne were founded in Cheren (1895), Asmara (1898), Saganeiti (1904), Ghinda (1906), Addi Caieh (1908) and Addi Ugri (1909).²⁰⁹ Since the colonial administration was constantly lacking the funds to regulate and organize the educational program it was obliged to cede the

²⁰² Indicatively in 1892 the expenditures under the supervision of the governor for the public works, the army, the post office and the installation of telegraphs amounted to 8 million lire.

²⁰³ For example, the Engineering corps of the Army was investigating the possibility of enlarging Archico's docking facilities, an enterprise that was certain to improve Eritrea's maritime communications. See AUSSME, L-7 Eritrea, folder 84/8, Massaua, 17 May 1887.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., folder 132/18, n.4533/54 Massaua, 17 December 1889.

²⁰⁵ Ibid, folder 133/9, Report Ferrovia Massaua Saati-Amministrazione, Rome, 8 September 1887, pp.1-4, Ibid., folder 133/8, Report Ferrovia Massaua Saati-relazione, Rome, April 1888, pp. 3-15 and Ibid, folder 133/2, Report Ferrovia Massaua Saati, pp. 1-5.

²⁰⁶ Francesco Schumfer, "Del problema ferroviario; con speciale riguardo al sistema finanziario più adatto alla costruzione di ferrovie nelle nostre colonie- Eritrea", Istituto coloniale italiano, Atti del secondo congresso degli italiani all'estero, relazioni e comunicazioni, vol. 1 part 2, Conference, (Rome, 11-20 June 1911), pp. 1155-1159.

²⁰⁷ AUSSME, L-7 Eritrea, folder 132/13, n. 19355, Rome, 27 December 1888, Ibid, folder 132/13, n. 823/193, Rome, 12 September 1887.

²⁰⁸ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *Amministrazione civile della colonia eritrea, 1894-1895: documenti diplomatici presentati al parlamento italiano dal ministro degli affari Esteri (Blanc)*, (Rome, 1895), pp. 119-122.

²⁰⁹ AUSSME, L-7 Eritrea, folder 132/1, Massaua, 10 December 1888.

education initiative to the monks, nuns and missionaries.²¹⁰ Even a local newspaper began its circulation as soon as 1891.²¹¹

The customs reforms, the researches for the benefit of the agriculture, the construction of warehouses and docks, always under a condition of containing spending, boosted the local economy albeit only slightly. The reason behind this rapid but limited growth was that "our occupation was not repressive but of social progress and prosperity" and that the population of Eritrea "has absolute confidence in the current protection [...]". On 6 February 1891 Antonio Starabba di Rudini (1839-1908), who was theoretically hostile to colonialism,²¹² replaced Crispi at the premiership. The new premier marked a period of a more economic and rational management of the colony. During that time new provisions were proclaimed such as the one of the 25th of January 1891 that founded a "sanitary council" and a Registry office. That year's royal act of October the 1st both amplified the governor's powers and rendered him directly accountable only to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As a result, the governors had in their hands full administrative, juridical, political and military authority; they issued laws, established courts and imposed new taxes upon the natives almost arbitrarily. Still, the colonial administration did not achieve a large degree of amalgamation since numerous agencies were still dependent on diverse authorities. Characteristically, the management of Massaua's naval station and all its facilities continued to be under the jurisdiction of the Maritime Ministry. The 28 February 1894 act, n. 68, transferred every financial obligation (military expenses, colonial personnel stipends) to Eritrea's independent annual budget, a move that aimed at lightening the government's monetary obligations and rationalizing the colony's administration.²¹³ It also meant that the governor was no longer accountable to the three ministries. Eritrea, not having a determined administrative-political system, cannot be categorized as a "crown colony" directly administrated by the

²¹⁰Governor Martini's belief that mixed Italian-native school classes would undermine the dominant race's prestige clashed with Carbonara's Christian ethics. His disapproval led to the interim solution of setting up separate school classes in the big urban centres and mixed ones in the areas sparsely populated by Italians. See Dirar, "Collaborazione e Conflitti", pp. 175-177.

²¹¹Eritrea's weekly official gazette the "Corriere Eritreo" commenced its circulation on June 12 1891. A few months later, on 4 November 1891 in Massaua another newspaper the *L'Eritreo* was published for the first time. See Romain Rainero, *I primi tentativi di colonizzazione agricola e di popolamento dell'Eritrea (1890-1895)*, (Milan, 1960), p. 71.

²¹²In May 5 1891 he exclaimed in front of the parliament: "I have never been an advocate of the African endeavour; I have not and I do not regret it. But I recognize that the great sacrifices, the expenses undertaken have produced some results. Italy's political situation drew advantages: our influence in the Orient has been augmented. I have to recognize that, but I urge the africanists to not insist in over stretching the enterprise". See *La Colonia Italiana in Africa*, p. 165.

²¹³Marinucci, "L'Amministrazione centrale coloniale", pp. 10-13. Rome's aspiration was for Eritrea to develop into an autonomous self-sufficient possession. In order to achieve that the colony had to stop relying on the government's subsidies and start developing based on internal production and taxation. Before the Italian installation in Eritrea the local tribes had to pay numerous heavy taxes to Ethiopia's central government. Characteristically the population residing in the province of Tigre was compelled to attribute various customary dues as well as a land tenure tax, an army maintenance tax and other informal monetary contributions. On 4 August 1894 another royal ordinance gave to the governor of the colony the right to adjust the subjugated regions' fiscal contributions at will. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *Amministrazione civile*, pp. 65-70.

metropolis nor as an autonomous "self governed colony" according to the British paradigm. Whereas the colony enjoyed a distinct administration that could levy taxes, Eritrea, did not have a fixed administrative-political system analogous to established colonial models. It cannot be categorized as a "crown colony" directly administered by the metropolis, nor as an autonomous "self governed colony" according to the British paradigm or negotiate trade agreements without Rome's consent, in regard to impeding legislation and the financial policy it had to follow Italy's lead.²¹⁴

At this point it would be appropriate to examine closely the administration and the true function of the colony, keeping in mind that most of the following information has derived from official, state and ministerial reports and studies. Following Eritrea's official founding act, a royal ordinance on 6 September 1890, n. 7126 that was actively promoted by Crispien gave birth to the Colonial Officers Corps.²¹⁵ This ostensibly specialized staff was composed predominantly by military officers whose central main motives were the prospect of profit and an instinctive attraction to "exotic" and exciting places.²¹⁶ The 23 May 1884 royal act established in Assab a Harbour Master office and on a later date (January 1885) a post office authorized to function as a telegraphic agency under the supervision of the Royal Post General Direction. Shortly after the occupation of Massaua another ordinance (19 February 1885) declared the establishment of a military fund office soon to become the colony's treasury, a post office, a civil commissariat and a customs office. During the 1887-1888 period a Harbour Master bureau was additionally founded along with a mortgage office in Massaua. Alongside the supreme governor of the colony the general secretary position was instituted with the task of directing every civil service, and unifying under its authority the political and administrative affairs of Eritrea (25 January 1891 act). Eventually its role was gradually downgraded under the weight of the governor's extraordinary powers and assumed a secondary auxiliary function. However, the Governor's competences were separated according to the 1 October 1891 law, n.583; the governor, under the authority of the Foreign Ministry, maintained the right to handle the colony's (internal and external) policy and to employ the army for "political purposes", whereas the commander of the troops, subordinate to the War Ministry, had the general command of the armed forces in Eritrea.²¹⁷ The deployment of the troops and matters that concerned the railway, the

²¹⁴ Antonio Colonna di Cesaro, "Del regime doganale nei rapporti fra le colonie e la madrepatria (in generale)", Istituto coloniale italiano, Atti del secondo congresso degli italiani all'estero, relazioni e comunicazioni, vol. 1 part 2, Conference, (Rome, 11-20 June 1911), pp. 1236-1237.

²¹⁵ Tomaso Columbano, "Il personale coloniale" in *L'Italia in Africa, serie giuridico-amministrativa*, v. I, (1869-1955), (Rome, 1963), p. 224.

²¹⁶ They were generally untrained and unfit to assume their administrative duties at least in comparison with their French counterparts of the École Coloniale or their British ones graduating from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. See Chiara Giorgi, *L'Africa come carriera*, pp.16-17.

²¹⁷ Tomaso Columbano, "Il personale civile nei territori del Mar Rosso" in *L'Italia in Africa, serie giuridico-amministrativa*, v. I, (1869-1955), (Rome, 1963), pp. 233-236.

telegraphs and the police ought to be mutually agreed upon by the two prevalent authorities.²¹⁸

The royal act n. 68 of 18 February 1894 provided for the creation of a unified autonomous administration under the immediate supervision of the government. Furthermore, every expense, besides an annual subsidy granted by Rome, had to be covered by the colony's revenues. Finally, the military and civil administrations were merged into one under the governor. As the colony expanded the need to broaden its jurisdictional competences and impose its political and military control upon the newly conquered territories appeared.²¹⁹ Additionally, new lodging and hygienic facilities had to be erected in order to accommodate incoming military reinforcements, especially in the 1895-6 period when the Italian military activity in East Africa reached its peak. The fact that at that time the state provided approximately 10,000,000 lire to balance Eritrea's budget comes as no surprise. The colonial sanitary council and the hygiene commission were mainly responsible for matters of public health, whereas public security was entrusted to the royal military corps of the Carabinieri. Likewise, the telegraphic communication of the colony's main cities with the outside world was the responsibility of the army's engineering corps.²²⁰ Other institutions and administrative authorities were: the finance office, the technical office responsible for the maintenance of streets and the erection of public works and the state assets office. The 22 May 1894 royal act regulated the responsibilities and powers of the Eritrean chamber of commerce (instituted on 26 February 1893) which had to promote the Italian trade and shipping in the region and facilitate the development of the colony in the most efficient way possible. This office's operational activities were supported by the customs' and trade revenues under the direction of the Foreign Ministry. In February, the Town Hall Commission was founded too. The central treasury of the African Troops responsible for the payment of the military personnel's wages was situated in Naples; in 1893-4 a treasury was also based in Massaua acting as a general accounting repository for the colonial administration.²²¹ Massaua's chamber of Commerce was replaced by another auxiliary and consultative to the colonial governor, institute called the Council of Commerce, on 11 July 1901.²²² Before the arrival of the Italians, the various territories of East Africa formed a discreet economic-monetary zone, centered around Ethiopia. Financial transactions in this zone were conducted in general with the Austrian Maria-Teresa coin. Rome hampered the circulation of the coin, and introduced the new Eritrean coin (tallero Eritreo) on 10 August 1890. Given the native's distrust and

²¹⁸ ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/5, folder 36, n. 3916, 26 July 1891.

²¹⁹ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *Amministrazione civile*, p. 5.

²²⁰ Naturally the Army's engineering corps was primarily employed at constructions pertaining to the colony's defence, such as fortification and trenches. See AUSSME, L-7 Eritrea, folder 84/9, n. 86, Massaua, 13 June 1888, AUSSME L-7 Eritrea, folder 84/10, Massaua, 2 May 1888 and AUSSME L-7 Eritrea, folder 84/29, Asmara, 6 September 1894.

²²¹ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *Amministrazione civile*, pp. 9-24.

²²² Marinucci, "L'Amministrazione centrale coloniale", p. 22.

disregard of the new monetary system the government struggled with monetary issues for several decades.²²³

Eritrea with the 24 May 1903 law, n. 205, "gained" its legislative and administrative autonomy slipping from the metropolis' tight executive and political dominance. The innovative step was the creation of the Colonial Council, an administrative and advisory board that interceded between Rome and Massaua and was the medium through which the Italian government and the parliament oversaw the colony. On 22 September 1905 Eritrea's administrative system was altered once again. The whole spectrum of the colony's executive and legislative competences were divided between the Governor, the Administrative Council, the newly founded Governmental Office and the various bureaucratic inspectors and the local residents, authorized representatives of the Italian rule in every corner of the colony (Harar, Adwa, Let Marefià and Baso). The governor remained the undisputed source of authority in Eritrea, being in control of the colony's political and administrative functions and responsible for its budget. The 1905 ordinance regulated family relations, private property, commercial transactions and among other provided for the elimination of the practice the slavery.²²⁴

In order to obtain a more comprehensive, wide-angle prospective on Eritrea's role and nature during its adolescence, the early formative years, its legal-justice administration regime should be examined as well. Massaua, following decades of Ottoman and Egyptian rule, in January 1887 according to official reports did not

²²³Eritrea's troubled monetary policy epitomizes impeccably the Italian authorities' indecisiveness and confusion, expressed in a variety of ways throughout their early colonial endeavour. In the Red Sea's African coastline two currencies were presumptively in use: the Egyptian coin, fallen in disuse after Cairo's strategic withdrawal from the area and the Maria Teresa currency issued by the Austro-Hungarian mint in Trieste. The Italian government in order to address the urgent practical issues in East Africa and obligations such as the local chieftains' payments, acquired a reserve of one million coins. Rome had to adopt and use a currency whose value fluctuated depending on the crude silver's unstable commercial value, not to mention the double headed eagle engraving on the coin symbolizing the long hated Austrian Empire. With a view of terminating this embarrassing dependency the state mints of Milan and Venice were planning to pay a manufacturing tribute to the Austro-Hungarian authorities and obtain the rights to produce the coin. Eventually, in 1887 the Italian government intervened and cancelled the purchase operation on the grounds that an independent state cannot use symbols and depictions of other states. Following the failure of the undertaking on August 10 1890 the tallero Eritreo was finally issued. It was a silver plated coin corresponding to 5 lire, convertible into the national currency and indirectly into gold. The reluctance to discard altogether the Maria Teresa coin and the choice to issue the new coin with a lower silver consistency than its predecessor, foreshadowed the abortion of this endeavour as well. Under those circumstances the Maria Teresa remained the prevalent coinage of the colony despite the fact that Rome desired, for reasons predominantly related to national prestige, to substitute it with a national one. An Italian but in every other respect identical to the Austrian, coin would be welcomed and easily accepted by the native populations. The new tallero d'Italia was officially issued by the royal act of 31 May 1918. It was similar to the Austrian one except the inscription "Regnum Italicum" on the one side and the Sabaudan crowned eagle on the other. Despite all these long-lasting efforts the original Maria Teresa currency was never effectively "expelled" from the colony and continued to circulate to a certain degree up to the 1930s. See Francesco Severio Caroselli, "La nostra politica monetaria nella colonia Eritrea", in *Atti del primo congresso di studi coloniali v. VI sezione V: economica-agraria*, (Florence, 1931), pp. 314-331.

²²⁴Marinucci, "L'Amministrazione centrale coloniale", pp. 23-26.

possess any juridical institutions to speak of.²²⁵ Despite this deprecatory statement a certain administrative system was in effect before Italy's arrival there: there was a fiscal system, a commercial court and a penal and civil court. Even so the Italian decision makers chose not to employ some of these long-established institutions, even on a temporary basis. They abolished them altogether and substituted them with Italian military oriented, oppressive canons.²²⁶

Immediately after the capture of Massaua, Italian authorities had to operate under the pressure of the Egyptian presence, the Ottoman obstructions and the French vice-consulate's protests, that represented the French but also the Greek government, in regard to the preservation of the profitable capitulations regime in the city. The first step in the direction of the Italianization of the juridical authority and by extension a decisive development towards the transformation of the disputed territory into an Italian colony was the replacement of the Egyptian court by an Italian civil and commercial one, competent to adjudicate criminal cases too. The foreigners and the natives juristically were subject to the military court, although native Muslims could always resort to the local qadi or mufti who judged in accordance to Islamic law. After 1885 the religious judges were appointed by the colonial authorities. This arrangement came into revision when the new Celli regulations, by the name of the legislator, were presented before the Italian parliament on 30 June 1886. A three member civil, commercial and correctional court was founded in Massaua; its authority covered the entire colonial territory. It had the possibility to impose penalty fines of up to 1,500 lire. Likewise, the newly instituted Judge office could arbitrate less significant crimes (misdemeanors and legal disputes) committed by Italian, native and foreigners and sentence them to pay fines up to 500 lire. As for the more serious offences there was the Appeal Court of Ancona. The military court, naturally operated under the army's penal provisions, and had the ability sentence imprisonment of up to three years. When the colony was proclaimed in a state of war in 1887, the Investigation Commission, a new military juridical institution was established. The Celli ordinance was in effect for 8 years, until 1894, and demonstrated that "time and good administration, especially judicially, will prove to the natives the convenience of being directly administrated by Italian civil servants".²²⁷

The Qadis, who addressed religious, personal and family matters and the Italian penal code that regulated the commercial, penal and civil affairs formulated the juridical regime of the Muslim tribes around Massaua. When the colony expanded (Keren-Asmara) to incorporate Ethiopian-Christian populations, the need for a new

²²⁵The serious disputes among the natives were informally solved by force and the law of vendetta ruled instead of a uniform penal code, making Massaua and the surroundings a chaotic and lawless place before the arrival of the Italians. See William Cafforel, "La Legislazione dell'Eritrea" in *L'eritrea Economica: prima serie di conferenze tenute in Firenze sotto gli auspici della societa di studi geografici e coloniali*, (Rome, 1913), pp. 484-486.

²²⁶Mellana, *L'Italia in Africa*, p.33.

²²⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 40-44.

legal framework appeared. The Italian government, lacking the necessary resources and having declared the colony in a state of war (2 May 1887) entrusted the administration of justice to the local nobility and to the military authorities. Hence, the Commission of Arbitration and Reconciliation (Commissione di Arbitrato e Conciliazione), presided by a military captain and two officials, was inaugurated in the zones of Keren and Asmara. The Courts' competences came under revision by Baratieri in November 1891 but remained militarily oriented. The fixation with authoritarian military law was a residue of the Italian 1861-1865 "brigandage" civil war and of the self-evident for the (northern) Italians axiom that the "culturally inferior" populations understood only brutal and terror inflicting punishments.²²⁸ War related violations, such as raids, looting or treason, committed either by Italians or by natives, were accordingly penalized via: execution, imprisonment, penal servitude, fines, flogging and deportation. Governor Orero in order to end the paradox of non-combatants receiving military trials attempted to reduce their number and influence by merging the military and the war court into a single institution on 1 January 1890. Attempts were undertaken to rationalize and resolve decisively the civil-military juridical conflict. After many adjustments and proposals the Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggested the retention of the native courts in Asmara and Keren, the legal equality for every person in the colony, the maintenance of the natives' mainly religious customs, the guarantee of everyone's personal liberty, the establishment of the juridical institution of the advocate, a judge (for penal and civil matters) and the institution of a penal and civil court. On 1 July 1896 two new arbitration courts were founded upon governor Baldissera's initiative in Adi Caieh and Adi Ugri as a way of imposing the colonial penal code and concurrently the Italian control and prestige to every corner of Eritrea. On the occasion (August 1896) the governor drew up a set of juridical adjustments. The most substantial point was the removal of the act of thievery committed by non-military personnel from the military courts' jurisdiction.²²⁹

Crispi did not bring Eritrea's inaugural law of January 1890 to the parliament and expose it to criticism by arguing that the colonial territory does not constitute national territory and therefore the parliament could not voice their ideas let alone interfere to the colony's administration. During Crispi's rule the parliament was often sidelined especially in matters that were certain to arouse a lot of opposition; the deputies had to read the newspapers to find out the latest developments in Africa. In a dictatorial manner he avoided the awkward discussion and the parliamentary "interpretations" regarding the colony's constitution. Thus, he imposed his own vision about the colony's future as an agriculture outlet, creating the office of colonial advisor for agriculture and commerce and managing to silence the opposition's (anti-

²²⁸Matteo Sisti, *Lotte sociali in Eritrea dall'occupazione di Massawa alla costituzione della "National Confederation of Eritrean Workers"*, (Rome, 2010), p. 23.

²²⁹Mellana, *L'Italia in Africa*, 63-97.

colonialists) inevitable objections.²³⁰ The programme concerning the colony is summarized in 10 points: a) search for the most fertile areas in the region, b) expropriation of the land by the Italian state, c) granting arable lands to the Italian settlers that would arrive and settle in Eritrea, d) concessions and facilitation of all kinds to the Italian immigrants and settlers, and e) their protection from any external danger, f) connection of the immigrant settlements with the main road arteries, g) diversion of the rivers, where this was possible, to enhance the agriculture, h) aid, support and even advices to newly arrived settlers about life and agriculture in Eritrea, (i) well-intentioned and continuous monitoring of the Italian families in colony, and finally (j) meeting the educational, religious and medical needs.²³¹ The actual usage value of the colony is ascertained according to this programme. Eritrea was earmarked to resolve the demographic-migration problem²³² and, secondarily, the financial one exclusively through agriculture. All the former proclamations and theories about a displacement colony, commercial station or naval base were no longer taken into account by the Italian leadership.

The colony formed the tip of the spear for new conquests in the mainland, i.e. in Ethiopia.²³³ The broad powers and the nature of the governor's authority gave a military character to the colony. Besides, the largest part of the dominion's budget was being absorbed by the military expenses. The author Edoardo Scarfoglio (1860-1917) aptly ascertained that a colony of military nature does nothing else but conduct war. Crispi, after the death of Depretis, took over as Prime Minister in 1887 (whereas Mancini was succeeded by di Robilanton 18 June 1885) and presented his colonial programme to the parliament as "one of the most memorable acts of our country." The policy of small sacrifices in men and money in return for huge advantages was voted for by 193 deputies while 55 opposed it.²³⁴ Sonnino, visiting Eritrea in 1890 determined that the climate was tolerable, the settlers safe, the communications secure and the land arable. Part of his assertions were undoubtedly true. The issue that the Italian colonialists would myopically not settle, refrained from facing or simply were not able to resolve was the lack of enterprising activity and capital.²³⁵ The programme of the colony and Rome's aspirations were meaningless without funds. Neither the glorious conquests, nor the imposition of the superior Italian civilization on the Africans, nor the attainment of the goal of equality with the other colonial powers would be able to compensate for this deficiency.

²³⁰ Gennaro Mondaini, *La legislazione coloniale italiana nel suo sviluppo storico e nel suo stato attuale v. I*, (Milano, 1941), p. 89.

²³¹ Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, pp. 481-484.

²³² Italian colonialism's demographic aspect is what appeared to distinguish the phenomenon from the British and French ones and rendered it commensurate to other models. See Carlo Giglio, *La colonizzazione demografica dell'impero*, (Rome, 1939), pp. 5-9.

²³³ Federica Guazzini, "Storie di confine: percezioni identitarie della frontiera coloniale tra Etiopia e Eritrea (1897-1908)", *Quaderni Storici, La colonia: Italiani in Eritrea*, 1/1 (2002), pp. 221-223.

²³⁴ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 362.

²³⁵ Roberto Cantalupo "La coscienza coloniale italiana" in *Il valore economico delle colonie italiane*, ed. A. Asquini, R. Cantalupo, F. Coletti, (Trieste, 1928), p. 24.

5.2 The function and early administration of Italian Eritrea

At the time when the Italians began to take an interest in the region, Ethiopia was a vast but poor country with numerous internal and external enemies. Because of the outdated feudal system that was in effect there, the strongest local lords-princes (Ras) who were harbouring ambitions for the Ethiopian throne were rising in revolt and gaining their independence often immersing the country in bloody civil clashes. In addition to the internal turmoil the King of Kings (Negus Negesti), Emperor Yohannes faced, as has been seen, the Egyptian attacks, the European scheming and subsequently the devastating raids of the Mahdists.¹ In this complex and chaotic situation the Italian factor was also added after 1885.

The hitherto friendly relations with Italy were abruptly disturbed when the Italian contingent occupied Massaua, a port that according to the Hewitt treaty belonged, with its heartland, to Ethiopia. The Italian guarantees about Ethiopia's unhindered supply with weapons and supplies through this port did very little to reassure the emperor,² who added yet another dangerous opponent to his extensive list of enemies.³ Martini, future governor of Eritrea, was the first to realize that the Italian presence in Massaua was inescapably predetermined to drive both sides into conflict. Crispi officially disapproved of a war with Ethiopia, but he also did not want Italy to remain "inactive", "in a passivity" dangerous to "our name and our honour". On 14 June 1887 in view of the military expenditures in Africa, a bill for the government to borrow an amount to the tune of 20 million lire was presented to the parliament. Despite the objections of the Left the bill was approved with 317 "ayes" and just 12 "noes". Every member of the Senate also voted in favour.⁴ The representative of the Extreme Left (Estrema Sinistra), Edoardo Pantano (1842-1932) argued that the Italian economic interests and the civilizing mission were incompatible with the African venture of the Crispi government while Costa demanding the return of the Italian

¹ The country thanks to its effective military organization had in the past warded off almost all the raiders and now under Emperor Yohannes was taking steps slowly but steadily towards the modernization and the consolidation of a strong central authority. The military successes against heathen African tribes in conjunction with the Christian tradition (the Ethiopians had adopted Christianity since the 1st century A.D. and they were Copts), made the subjects of the emperor proud and indomitable fighters. From all the "underdeveloped" peoples of Africa the Italians chose to challenge, and were partly pushed to do so, the most war-experienced and battle-hardened. See Silvana Palma, *L'Italia coloniale*, (Rome, 1999), p. 8. In the period under examination, the only conflict in which the Ethiopian arms were crushed was the Anglo-Ethiopian war of 1867-1868. Italy did not take advantage of the experience of its partner in Africa, Britain, since being arrogant and confident about its success, it never asked for British assistance either at an advisory or at a technical level.

² The emperor accused in a letter the Italians for not respecting the Ethiopian sovereignty, the trade concessions and the Hewitt treaty. See ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/3, folder 19, London 12 January 1888.

³ Richard Pankhurst, *The Ethiopians*, (Massachusetts, 1998), p. 171.

⁴ Giacomo Perticone, *L'Italia in Africa, la politica coloniale dell'Italia negli atti, documenti e discussioni parlamentari*, (Rome, 1965), pp. 27-28.

soldiers from the Red Sea stated: "I see the flag of my homeland above battlefields for freedom and independence, I see it in the civilizing missions that always elevate the nation closer to the heights of the ideals, I do not see it, I cannot see it in the African ventures".⁵

Thus, immediately after their consolidation on the shoreline the Italians implemented a policy of expansion towards the hinterland, towards the Ethiopian plateau, an objective seemingly feasible at the time when the emperor was setting as priority the tackling of the Mahdist danger. Italy in the midst of this fortunate for itself conjuncture had the possibility to bolster its position and to expand without great sacrifices.⁶ Despite the voices of the opposition within the Italian parliament about a meaningless expansion without an economic reasoning, the government, in search of successes and stature, attempted to exploit to the fullest the Ethiopian weaknesses and the internal conflicts between the feudal lords and the emperor for its own benefit. In its effort to attract with gifts and pay-offs allies and accomplices against Emperor Yohannes, Rome collaborated with his rival for the crown, Ras Menelik or Menelik Sahle Maryam (1844-1913). The following day after the capture of Massaua, army units, without encountering any particular problems, overran Otumlo and Monculo and a few months later (June 1885) Sahati or Saati and Wi'a expanding the Italian sphere of influence 30 kilometres in the mainland.⁷ The Italian troops were supposedly serving defensive and peacekeeping purposes.⁸ In this manner the quest for fertile lands and Africa's economic penetration turned into a policy of territorial expansion under the auspices of Britain.⁹

Menelik, king of the Scioa province (Showa or Scioa) in central Ethiopia, typically a vassal of the emperor (officially since 20 March 1878) but practically independent, grasped and skillfully exploited the political and economic antagonism between the European powers at the time of Africa's partition. Menelik, displaying diplomatic skills not dissimilar to Bismarck's, was able on one hand to strengthen his position by receiving supplies and weapons from the Europeans and Egyptians and, on the other hand, by performing a balancing act and taking advantage of the disputes between the Powers, to maintain the independence of his region; independence guaranteed and "subsidized" by the colonialists at the expense of their own

⁵ Francesco Surdich, "Il colonialismo italiano, l'imperialismo straccione," in *Il Calendario*, (Sept. 1996), p. 17. According to the socialist anti-Africanist deputies the Ethiopians by defending their ancestral lands were reminiscent of the Italians in the period of the Risorgimento while the Italian imperialists were being aptly likened to the Austrian conquerors. See Ibid., p. 18. According to others the Ethiopians replaced the Austrians in the role of Italy's enemy, see Zeffirino Pacini, *Italia e Africa*, (Rome, 1950), p. 68.

⁶ Perticone, *L'Italia in Africa, la politica*, p. 30.

⁷ Renzo Sertoli Salis, *Storia e politica coloniale Italiana (1869-1935)*, (Milan-Messina, 1936), pp. 29-30.

⁸ Giorgio Rochat, *Il colonialismo italiano*, (Turin, 1974), p. 23.

⁹ Nicola Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione coloniale italiana*, (Bologna, 2002), p. 69.

expansionist plans.¹⁰ All the Powers without exception rushed to conclude treaties of friendship and co-operation aiming at a privileged position in a vast and strategically important area. The French in constant search of an ally against British interests stressed the "deep sympathy" that they were harbouring towards a "proud and brave" nation. Queen Alexandrina Victoria (1819-1901) sent a recorded message with the use of a gramophone to Menelik revealing the British friendship and goodwill towards Ethiopia. The Russians by underscoring the close relations between the Coptic Ethiopian and the Orthodox Church and by sending impressive gifts to Addis Ababa tried to integrate the country into their sphere of influence. Belgium hastened to establish diplomatic relations with the Ethiopian court as well.¹¹

The king of Scioa, seeking funds to equip his army and pay tribute to the emperor, began predatory raids south of his kingdom against settlements (in the region of Gala) within the ambiguous Ethiopian borderline and beyond. Even though he feared his overlord's reaction, he developed relations with European traders and in 1876 he came into contact with an Italian exploratory mission. That was the Chiarini-Antinori mission, the first of its kind in Scioa that resulted in the concession to the Italians of a 95 hectares expanse in Let Marefia as a scientific-research center.¹² In March 1883 Menelik and the Italian diplomat Antonelli officially signed a trade agreement, based on the most favourable nation clause and resulted in the connection of Scioa to Assab and the delivery of 2,000 Remington rifles to the Ethiopian side. It was later ratified (21 May) as the 10 year treaty of friendship and commerce. According to it, Scioa had to use the port of Assab (and not the French one in Obock), the rights (right of access, religious freedom, free trade) of the Italians in Scioa and those of the Scioans in Italian soil would be safeguarded and the Ras was given the possibility of using the Italian diplomatic avenues.¹³ Exchanging diplomats was agreed as well.¹⁴ These developments and the failure of a similar commercial mission by Matteucci and Bianchi to the lands controlled by the emperor's forces in 1878 slightly alarmed Yohannes.¹⁵ When the Italians began expanding towards the mainland with British assistance and impeding the Ethiopian resupply via Massaua, Yohannes, already dissatisfied with London because of the violation of the Hewitt treaty, realized that vindication could be found only by resorting to arms.¹⁶ The 23 April 1885 Ferrari-Nerazzini appeasing mission, aiming at convincing the emperor that the capture of Massaua took place as an action to pacify and contain the Mahdists, had ambiguous results.¹⁷ Menelik, for the time being, did remain loyal to the emperor; however, he kept a sympathetic neutrality towards the Italians and every

¹⁰ Harold G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 1994), p. 77.

¹¹ H. L. Wesseling, *Divide and Rule: The Partition of Africa 1880-1914*, (Westport, 1996), pp. 243-244.

¹² Angelo Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa Orientale Dall'Unità alla Marcia su Roma*, (Rome-Bari, 1976), p. 71.

¹³ Giuseppe Piccinini, *Guerra d'Africa*, (Rome, 1887), pp. 5-6.

¹⁴ ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/14, folder 108, Ankober, 22 May 1883.

¹⁵ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 85.

¹⁶ Marcus, *History of Ethiopia*, pp. 78-80.

¹⁷ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 198.

other European power as well, as he had every reason to maintain friendly relations with them.¹⁸ Although he also sensed the Italian danger, he was aspiring to Rome's support and he cynically used it to claim the Ethiopian throne and to equip his troops. Simultaneously, he was collaborating admirably with the French as well. The French arms trade between Djibouti and Ethiopia was so profitable that it covered with ease the maintenance costs of the Djibouti colony, urging Paris to become more active in order to ensure that this commercial avenue remained open at the expense of the Italian interests.¹⁹

When the Italians advanced in the interior installing advanced outposts at Sahati, the nominal leader of the region neighboring to Massaua, called Mareb-Mellasc, Ras Alula Abba Nega (1827-1897) sent a telegram-ultimatum demanding the withdrawal of the Italian troops from his territories. In the skirmish that followed the Ethiopians were easily rebuffed²⁰ and the Minister of War, Ettore Bertolè-Viale (1829-1892) announced with satisfaction that the occupation was completed without any problems.²¹ But the obscure Sahati or Saati was not sufficient and the conquest of the area beyond was deemed necessary for the safety of the Italian dominions. Zula was captured on 1 September and Ua-a on 23 November according to the orders of the Supreme Commander in Africa, General Carlo Genè; Ras Alula once more asked for the evacuation of these positions but to no avail. Genè replied that he carried out the aforementioned captures out of friendship for the Ethiopians and to facilitate trade. Emperor Yohannes, convinced by then that the Italians came to Ethiopia as conquerors stated in his letter to Menelik: "...they are not a serious folk, they are meddlers and all this has to be the work of the English. The Italians did not come to these parts because they lack grass and pastures in their country, but they came here out of ambition, to expand because they are many and not rich...with God's help they will leave humiliated and unsatisfied and with their honour lost in front of the world."²² He also invited Menelik to stop collaborating with them and join him in his effort to repulse them. Menelik, interested in maintaining the italo-abyssinian rift shared the contents of the letter with the Italian authorities, namely with the diplomat Antonelli.²³

In 1886 Crispi in the plenary session of the parliament placed the issue on a fresh footing: "We have been at Assab. We refused to turn Assab into a military base.

¹⁸ Menelik proposed to the Italian side in 1887, to assume the role of the mediator between them and Yohannes in order to find a mutually acceptable solution and avoid bloodshed. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXI, (Rome, 1968), p. 239.

¹⁹ Marcus, *History of Ethiopia*, p. 84.

²⁰ The Italians had lost only 8 men, among them the first army officer fallen in Africa lieutenant Cuomo. See Giovanni Vitali, *Le guerre Italiane in Africa: la conquista dell'Eritrea e della Somalia, la conquista della Libia*, (Milano 1936), p. 26.

²¹ Pankhurst, *Ethiopians*, p. 171.

²² Ministero della Guerra-Ufficio Storico, *Storia Militare della Colonia Eritrea, 1869-1894*, vol. 1, (Rome, 1935), p. 96.

²³ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 211.

We must therefore defend Assab from our position in Massaua."²⁴ Thus, the Italian troops that were stationed in Massaua had to face the Ethiopian challenge since "it was neither decent nor possible to be withdrawn in the face of threats." Initially, they approached the tribe of the Habab, hostile to Alula and Emperor Yohannes and placed it under their protection.²⁵ On 26 January 1887 a force of 500 men under Lieutenant Colonel Tommaso De Cristoforis (unknown-1887) en route to Sahati was ambushed, encircled and annihilated by Alula's 10,000 men at Dogali. Upon word of this disaster Genè withdrew the garrisons of Sahati, Ua-a and Arafali.²⁶

The complete destruction had a major impact on the Italian public opinion. The myth of the Dogali heroes, who like the Risorgimento patriots had sacrificed themselves for the glory of Italy, was created and spread. After the capture of Massaua and especially after the Dogali defeat, far more people than the already "colonial conscious" explorers, servicemen and industrialists, started taking some interest in Africa being more susceptible to patriotic, pro-expansion oratory.²⁷ The press inflated and endued with respect and admiration the most tragic time of the Italian arms in Africa until then, moving the whole country.²⁸ However, the radical and democratic press, and the left wing deputies attacked fiercely the African policies of the government. The platonic discourses in regard to the future of Assab some years earlier evolved, through Dogali, into acute confrontations. The tragic event confirmed that a social class opposed to the "africomania" had been formed, initially indifferent but gradually, hostile to the notion of expansion and willing to contest and criticize the very validity and motivation of the prevalent colonial ideology. Many dissident servicemen and public servants were perceiving a transfer to the "horrendous Africa" as a punitive demotion.²⁹ The *Emancipation* newspaper, ridiculing the bombastic declarations about the "national virility" and the "right of the powerful" noted sarcastically: "[...] what a honourable game is to occupy, to attack a port and whatever country, to establish oneself as an overlord or a thief and fight the natural native reaction with every possible means of destruction given by the art of war."³⁰ According to the editor Italy should have taken care of other priorities in the internal front before engaging in an unreasonable war. Deputy Costa, convicted twice

²⁴Perticone, *L'Italia in Africa, la politica*, pp. 29-30.

²⁵Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, pp. 220-221. The protectorate was officially declared on 9 July 1887. Italy's relations with the Habab, a muslim tribe hostile to Addis Abeba's central authority irritated Ras Alula, who, in his turn, started raiding their lands. See Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 210.

²⁶See Harold G. Marcus, "Imperialism and expansionism in Ethiopia from 1865 to 1900" in *Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960, v.1, The history and politics of colonialism 1870-1914*, ed. L.H Gann, Peter Duigan (Cambridge, 1969), p. 426.

²⁷Nicola Labanca, "Introduzione" in *Pagine d'Africa*, ed. N. Labanca, (Trento, 1994), pp. 24-25.

²⁸Alessandro Triulzi, "Adwa: From Monument to Document", in *Italian colonialism, legacy and memory*, ed. J. Andall, D. Duncan, (Bern, 2005), pp. 151-154.

²⁹Alessandro Sapelli, *Memorie d'Africa (1883-1906)*, (Bologna, 1935), pp. 3-5.

³⁰Romain H. Rainero, *L'anticolonialismo italiano da Assab ad Adua (1869-1896)*, (Milan, 1971), pp. 137-138.

during this period as a "rebel" by Rome's courts, once more served as the opposition's spokesperson: "Stop this crazy and criminal undertaking; withdraw our troops from Africa". This view was shared by numerous citizens, who set up democratic and "garibaldian" anticolonial committees, in many Italian cities at the time.³¹ Besides Africa, the programme and demands of these assemblies usually revolved around the repression of the democratic ideals, the social problems, the opposition to the Triple alliance and the state's religious policy. The Milanese "Committee for the withdrawal of the troops from Africa" condemned the colonial undertaking and declared in its manifesto: "Calling the African venture a civilizing enterprise, in the holy name of civilization is distorted; civilization is not imposed by force or violence; the sense of public and civil morality is corrupted by arousing enthusiasm for vendetta and conquest; the welfare and prosperity of the country is ruined by promoting an unjust and cruel war". Democratic associations in Livorno and Siena defending the nominal right of every people to exist protested officially to the government against "these assaults upon the peoples' liberty that even though they were barbarians they could not and should not be deprived of their most sacred rights." Along these lines the liberal Deputy Alfredo Beccarini (1826-1890) and 17 of his colleagues signed and presented to the government a petition for the renounce of any kind of aggression in Africa, in May 1888.³² The publisher of the Milanese newspaper *L'Italia del Popolo*, Dario Papa (1846-1897) defined his countrymen African tendency as a nuisance without reason. He based his insightful assessment upon the state's precarious financial position, the immigration hemorrhage, the "southern" problem, the people's excessive religious adherence, the illiteracy and the dreadful living conditions. Under this prism Italian socialists' and the African "enemies'" demands appear to be the same: public education, work, emancipation. Referring to the latter Papa claimed: "I tell you, as far as the Abyssinians are concerned, as barbarous and miserable as they are, I have only sympathy considering them as defenders of their country... that they are defending their country".³³

Even more interesting was the Catholic Church's moral support to the colonial policy, through liturgies, speeches and commemoration ceremonies, despite the permanently tense relations with the "usurper" government in Rome. Clergyman Conforti while giving funeral rites for Dogali's victims asserted: "The great God, in these times, desired to give to the world a sacred taste of the Italian valour [...] He desired to demonstrate that Roman blood is still running in our inflamed veins." On 2 March professor Risicato, while giving a speech about Dogali in the church of the city of Campobasso, suggested: "24 centuries have already passed while civilized humanity waited for this glorious event. Thermopylae and Dogali, Leonida and De Cristoforis, here gentlemen, was accomplished the world's greatest epopee" In Parma,

³¹Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 247. Costa in May 1885 had also called for the troops withdrawal and invited the government to "direct its affections to the practical relief of the social classes that were more numerous and destitute" by raising the salaries and the working conditions. See *Ibid.*, p. 190.

³²Rainero, *L'anticolonialismo*, pp. 145, 195-197.

³³*Ibid.*, pp. 173-176.

bishop Miotti maintaining that Dogali should be an example for the younger generations, argued: "In your hands lies the destiny of our beloved motherland. God and motherland, God and people, this is your outcry, the goal of your efforts." Finally reverent Anzani, in the Campi Salentino region, commented that the Italian soldiers spilled their blood on barbarian soil to promote the pure and true Christian faith.³⁴ For some Catholic circles the government had stained the "glory of Dogali" by hiding the truth and not assuming the responsibility for the tragedy.³⁵ The rivalry for some disputed lands between Eritrea and Ethiopia had turned into contempt and hatred for the savage heathen Abyssinians. Just two years after the occupation of Massaua, Rome went to war with Ethiopia.³⁶ Italy had to react dynamically and to avenge the destruction of Dogali as soon as possible, proving that it was a Great Power.

Initially 5 million lire were made available. On 14 June another 20 million lire were dispatched along with reinforcements and battleships in the Red Sea "for military action to be carried out in Africa". A few days earlier Crispi stated in the parliament: "Barbarians only understand the might of the cannon; well then, this cannon will thunder at the right time and we hope that it will signal our army's victory."³⁷ Di Robilant's departure from office and the death of Prime Minister Depretis, in 1887, left the foreign ministry and the premiership of the country in the hands of Crispi. During his time total military expenditures, just in the two year period of 1888-1889, reached the unfathomable amount of 560 million lire whereas in 1880 they were estimated at 256 million lire.³⁸ The Minister of Public Works Giuseppe Saracco (1821-1907), worried about the 1888-1889 budget's declination by 488 million lire, suggested the abandonment of Massaua to Crispi in order to avoid "the nightmare of a new surprise that would cost to the mother land, blood and money."³⁹ Crispi was adamant. The battle at Dogali was the catalyst, the turning point that pushed Italy deeper in the colonial path and set in motion all the mechanisms which would lead to the battle of Adwa.⁴⁰ The defeat wounded the national feeling and made public opinion more prone to the demagoguery and nationalist bravado of the Prime Minister. Crispi's authoritarian style of governing⁴¹ and his foreign policy

³⁴Ibid., pp. 253-256.

³⁵"Bollettino Politico", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 68, Friday 25 March 1887, p. 1. Likewise, in an article advocating for the Italian stay in Africa, the author commenting on the Dogali debacle, claimed that the army fought and died "as Christians" in Africa whereas in Italy, where "the government is atheist" the soldiers could not exercise their religious obligations. See "Restiamo in Africa", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 100, Tuesday April 30 1890, p. 1.

³⁶Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 69.

³⁷Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 260.

³⁸John Whittam, *The politics of the Italian army 1861-1918*, (Hamden, 1997), pp. 124-125.

³⁹Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p.322.

⁴⁰Tekeshe Negesh, *Italian colonialism in Eritrea 1882-1941, policies, praxis and impact*, (Uppsala, 1987), p. 2.

⁴¹The same cruelty and the contempt that Crispi displayed to the Africans, he showed to his Sicilian countrymen as well during the revolution of the Fasci Siciliani. Between 1892 and 1893 the Fasci organizations were rapidly expanding and gaining support initially in the urban areas and later in the countryside of Sicily. This proletariat and socialist oriented movement was expressing the widespread

that was unbeknown to the parliament or contrary to its views, did not particularly trouble the public opinion that was now demanding conquests, victories and a large-scale war in Africa. Encouraged and certain about the outcome of the war Crispi demanded for the cessation of hostilities, an official apology from the Ethiopian side for the events at Dogali, the recognition of the Italian protectorate over the Assaorta and the Habab, the annexation to Eritrea of the Sahati and Sanahit regions and finally the conclusion of a new treaty of friendship, peace and trade between Rome and Addis Ababa. Yohannes reasonably considered the Italian demands to be excessive and requested the return of Massaua and the lands of the Bogos tribe in Ethiopia.⁴² The gap was unbridgeable.

The mediation of the British diplomat Gerald Herbert Portal (1858-1894) failed to smooth over the situation and the negotiations came to nothing.⁴³ The events that followed are known in the Italian historiography as the First War of Africa (Prima Guerra d'Africa).⁴⁴ In charge of preparing the colony for war was Saletta who had been promoted to the rank of general. He had only just returned from India where he had been closely observing the British organization of the native troops;⁴⁵ he proclaimed Massaua in a state of siege and ordered a coastal naval blockade to cut off possible incoming supplies to the Ethiopians.⁴⁶ Under his orders telegraphic posts

distress caused by the daily life hardships, the miserable working and living conditions, the social injustice, the exploitation and the economic stagnation. In the spring of 1893 the Fasci multiplied and united the workers, farmers, craftsmen, merchants and even students in a common cause through a series of strikes against the central authority. The Prime Minister, suspecting Franco-Russian involvement, reacted dynamically by mobilizing the army, stifling the revolt and severely punishing the perpetrators. See Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 565. This "Crispi dictatorship" lasted a total of 6 years. He served as President of the Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs from July 1887 until February 1891 and from November 1893 until March 1896, years in which the commercial antagonism with France and the economic crisis were heightened. In the two years that he spent in the backstage, di Rudini and then Giovanni Giolitti (1842-1928) came to power. J.L. Miège, *L'Imperialismo coloniale Italiano dal 1870 ai giorni nostri*, (Milan, 1976), p. 47. In 1893 the Italian people's lack of confidence to the unified state, to the political system and to the institutions necessitated the assumption of power by a strong and centralized government. Crispi took over the role of the "socialist dictator" in co-operation with the Minister of Treasury, Sonnino. With the suspension of the parliamentary proceedings in 1895, the economic protectionism and the opportunistic foreign policy he managed to turn workers, farmers, industrialists and the middle class into his enemies. At the end of his tenure, he was drawing support only from the pro-monarchist, conservative and Catholic circles. At the time, few viewed sympathetically his internal line of action, let alone his costly, conceited African policy. See Francesco Barbagallo, "Da Crispi a Giolitti. lo Stato, la politica, i conflitti sociali" in *Storia d'Italia, Liberalismo e Democrazia 1887-1914*, ed. G. Sabbatucci, V. Vidotto, (Bari, 1995), pp. 35-44.

⁴² Ibid., pp. 291-292.

⁴³ Pankhurst, *Ethiopians*, p. 172.

⁴⁴ The plan of the military operations was orchestrated by the Italian General Staff. According to it the dispatch of 8,000-10,000 men to the front was not enough to bring about peace and tranquillity on the borders of the Italian colonies. Simultaneously, Rome had to conclude alliances with the local tribes, collaborate with the Muslims in Sudan and instigate riots in the interior of Ethiopia. The military obligations in Europe, stemming from the agreements of the Triple Alliance, did not allow the commitment of the entire Italian army in Africa. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XX, (Rome, 1988), pp. 519-522.

⁴⁵ Ministero della Guerra, *Storia Militare della Colonia Eritrea*, p. 98.

⁴⁶ AUSSME D4 ERITREA, folder 41, Massaua, 23 March 1887 and ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/3, folder 22, Massaua, 1 May 1887.

were erected, the accommodation capacity was expanded in sight of the arrival of the expeditionary corps and two underground wires were installed between Assab and Massaua for the "continuous and daily telegraphic communications with our brothers of the Army and the corps that defend our flag's honour in Africa".⁴⁷ An effort to tighten the relations with Rome's African "allies", the subjugated tribes Cafel and Habab was also undertaken in order to diplomatically and politically isolate Emperor Yohannes. In this light the Antonelli-Menelik alliance treaty was signed in Addis Abeba on 20 October 1887.⁴⁸

In December 1887 Rome sent to Eritrea General di San Marzano to lead the troops (roughly 18,000 men landed in Massaua between 9 November and the end of December) that would take up the annihilation of the Ethiopian army. On 1 February 1887 these forces captured Saati and, after erecting fortifications and trenches positioned themselves defensively.⁴⁹ Yohannes deployed his army opposite of the Italian positions but did not attack fearing the losses that the Italian defensive arrangement, the "maginot coloniale" would inflict.⁵⁰ The emperor watching his numerous army (80,000) running out of supplies and the Italians not daring to exit their fortifications was forced to abandon the battlefield and to move against the Mahdists.⁵¹ At the time Ethiopia was attacked from every direction. Yohannes had to contain the Italians on the coast, reduce the danger from Sudan and impose himself over the feudal lords of the country and in particular over the ambitious Menelik. Since the Ethiopians withdrew from the battlefield, the victory automatically and most importantly bloodlessly belonged to the Italian side.⁵² After this development, Rome acquired freedom of action and the possibility to expand its influence in the region undisturbed with the contested areas coming under Italian control.⁵³ Italy had won, had increased its prestige and had expanded in the hinterland untroubled. As a peace treaty with Yohannes was never-signed, it would continue to expand unimpeded until the violent closure of 1896.⁵⁴

In July 1888 Menelik assured Count Antonelli that he had now revolted against the emperor and asked for weapons and munitions. At a time when Yohannes

⁴⁷Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp.264-265.

⁴⁸By this agreement, clearly directed against Yohannes, the Italians recognized Menelik as a sovereign power in Ethiopia in return for a promise "to aid the government of his Majesty the King of Italy in all circumstances". The Italians would also abstain from any new annexations and they had to hand out 5,000 rifles to Menelik, who in his turn promised not to use them against the Italians under any circumstance. See Marcus, "Imperialism and expansionism in Ethiopia from 1865 to 1900", p. 424.

⁴⁹Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 286.

⁵⁰Franco Bandini, *Gli Italiani in Africa, storia delle guerre coloniali*, (Milano, 1971), p. 65.

⁵¹ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 70.

⁵² Some circles though lamented the lack of a harsh retribution to the Ethiopians since the outcome was not adequate to the "nation's moral and pragmatic" interests. See "Bollettino Politico", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 82, Thursday, 5 April 1888, p. 1.

⁵³Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali*, p. 71.

⁵⁴Sahati and Ua-a were recaptured and other regions followed suit. See Cosimo Caruso, *Ricordi D' Africa (1889-1896)*, (Rome, 1939), p. 12.

was prioritizing the combating of the Mahdists, an alliance of this sort and a civil war in Ethiopia was fully serving the Italian interests.⁵⁵ Antonelli advised the Italian government to supply Menelik with the necessary armament and to draw up plans for the occupation of Asmara. Once the army of Scioa assaulted the imperial army or the capital, the Italian troops from their staging positions in Eritrea would be providing assistance as soon as possible. However, when the weapons did not arrive in Scioa on the agreed date, Menelik entered into a round of negotiations with Yohannes to defuse the crisis. Eventually Antonelli arrived in Ethiopia bringing 10,000 rifles, but at the moment the outbreak of an intra-Ethiopian conflict, i.e. a civil war was unrealistic. Numerous vassal princes rushed to assist and to place themselves under the orders of Yohannes for the cause of defending the Christian empire against the followers of Mahdi. The Italians putting the missed opportunity behind them continued their advance in the interior while Ethiopian troops, with Yohannes in command, headed towards Begemder.⁵⁶

Despite the German concerns that the war between Ethiopia and Italy could affect the European balance,⁵⁷ Crispi during this period was enjoying a relative support from the Allies and from Britain, a fact which allowed him to set increasingly more ambitious goals. He also appeared to enjoy a certain liberty of action from the parliament.⁵⁸ The main characteristics of his premiership, populism, authoritarianism and the co-operation with the Crown were complementing in a perfect way his ambitious African policy, which among other things seemed to distract the Italian public opinion from the economic problems and the unemployment in the interior.⁵⁹ Hailing from the ranks of the Left, like Mancini, he was aspiring to make Italy a first rate colonial power. Unlike however, his predecessor he was not taking into account the potential consequences, acting arbitrarily and irresponsibly. To achieve this goal the Italian leaders orchestrated and followed two "programmes". The policy oriented to Scioa (*politica scioanna*) was making provisions for the full co-operation and alliance with Menelik via gifts, weapons and diplomatic support as means of expanding the Italian influence on the mainland. This policy of indirect imperialism, which Antonelli had already set in motion, could bring about economic and political

⁵⁵ The Italians were forced to seek Menelik's alliance because of the uncompromising and hostile attitude of Yohannes. Because of this alliance the title of "traitor" would be conferred upon Menelik by his fellow countrymen.

⁵⁶ Marcus, *History of Ethiopia*, pp. 86-87.

⁵⁷ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 269.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 297 The African developments seemed to captivate the majority of the Italian parliament. During the 12 May 1888 discussion just 1/8 of the deputies railed against the San Marzano expedition, whereas a year later (7 May 1889) the socialist anticolonial opposition was nowhere to be found. It is striking that a few years earlier many deputies had not given their consensus for the nationalization of Assab; as for the expedition for Massaua, a sizeable one third of the chamber was against it.

⁵⁹ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 72.

benefits without bloody sacrifices in a peaceful and subtle manner.⁶⁰ Its inspirer was trying to convince the Italian government of the benefits of the plan, which aimed to making Ethiopia its stooge without bloodshed. Indeed, the relations of "sincere friendship"⁶¹ with Scioa took on a special importance for Rome since in this manner the French influence would be limited, Massaua would develop economically and the final victory over Yohannes would be brought forward.⁶² As part of this policy Antonelli, on 22 January 1889 delivered 5,000 rifles and ammunitions to Scioa's new capital, Addis Abeba. At the opposite end, there were the supporters of the policy orientated towards the rich province of Tigre (politica tigrina). Their main representative was Baldissera, the new commander of the Italian troops in Africa since April 1888. In charge of the troops (approximately 6,000) that remained after the withdrawal of San Marzano's expeditionary force, he carried out a plan that entailed alliances, the use of divide and rule tactics and expansion. This forceful line of action, contrary to the politica scioanna, dictated the occupation by military means of the zone around Eritrea and either the expansion up to Tigre or the creation of a buffer state in the region to safeguard Eritrea's territorial integrity. This policy, naturally, was being held in high esteem by Rome's military and imperialist circles. In reality, as demonstrated by the frequent diplomatic contacts of Antonelli with the king of Scioa and the occupation of Keren and Asmara respectively in May and August 1889, these policies were followed simultaneously with disastrous results.⁶³

With the occupation of Asmara, on 4 August 1889, the colony was expanded up to the Mareb River and the Ethiopian mainland. Keren,⁶⁴ a location which according to the Hewitt treaty was Ethiopian territory, was "liberated", according to Baldissera's statement, without the knowledge and therefore without the consent of the parliament.⁶⁵ From that moment on, the easy victory and the euphoria that followed allowed the Italian militarists to turn their gaze towards Tigre and Adwa.⁶⁶ What they did not seem to realize was the fact that these "successes" were not down to meticulous planning or the capability of the Italian arms but to Ethiopia's failure to react vigorously at that moment in time.⁶⁷ When farther expansion to the west was determined unprofitable, the Italian colonial army, comprised of African Askari soldiers, turned towards Sudan; Africans were employed instead of Italians to avoid the turmoil that a potential second Dogali would cause. The anarchy that prevailed

⁶⁰ Perticone, *L'Italia in Africa, la politica*, p. 31. Under this perspective the development of trade relations was preferable to the violent civilizing with the "cannon and the bayonet". See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXIII, (Rome, 1995), p. 479.

⁶¹ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XVII-XVIII, (Rome, 1994), p. 5.

⁶² Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XV-XVI, (Rome, 1993), p. 132.

⁶³ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 72.

⁶⁴ Commissar Branchi pretended that Keren was fertile, with a climate resembling that of Palermo and could easily become an outlet for the Italian immigrants and a starting point for the later subjugation of Ethiopia. See ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/4, folder 30, Rome, 29 April 1889.

⁶⁵ Perticone, *L'Italia in Africa, la politica*, pp. 31-32.

⁶⁶ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 75.

⁶⁷ Rochat, *Il colonialismo*, p. 25.

there allowed Baldissera to proceed unimpeded to the occupation of Oculé Kasai and of Sarae, successes that were inflated by the Italian press.⁶⁸ Baldissera's plan regarding Sudan was the imposition of a protectorate upon a confederation of dependent buffer states, a regime that would guarantee the Italian security and influence upon the whole region.⁶⁹

The period of the first 20 months of Baldissera's military administration was apparently the happiest of the colony.⁷⁰ The military successes and the consolidation of the Italian sovereignty and influence on the Ethiopian hinterland in conjunction with the security of the border, the relative prosperity and the development of the infrastructures, within certain financial limitations, bode a healthy future for the Italian dominions. The colonial army was reorganized, hospitals and aqueducts were constructed and the port of Massaua was extended, while good neighbourly relations were maintained with the surrounding tribes. However, on 1 August 1888, the Italians occupied the neighbouring village of Zoula, proving that the colony, even though it was not yet officially founded, had primarily a military character and operation. Indeed, Eritrea by becoming the spearhead of the Italian expansionism in Africa was constantly under military law and in a state of war, absorbing in parallel huge amounts for its fortification and security.⁷¹ So that the colony would not be totally sustained at the expense of the Italian state and to find the necessary resources to carry out his grandiose plans the governor often levied extraordinary taxation. The additional taxation caused the indignation of the local population and of the foreign traders, including the Greeks who were operating in Eritrea.⁷²

Despite the military successes and the conquests that Crispi was appropriating and crediting himself with and despite the favourable developments in Ethiopia's interior, the situation in Eritrea was hardly idyllic. The unfortunate Livraghi incident and the dispute between Baratieri and Leopoldo Franchetti (1847-1917) would prove the fundamental weaknesses of the Italian colonialist system. The Livraghi scandal concerned the criminal activities of Dario Livraghi, captain of the colonial police, and of his partner, secretary of the office for colonial affairs, Eteocle

⁶⁸Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali*, p. 76.

⁶⁹ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/5, folder 25, n. 3424/81, Rome, 11 November 1888.

⁷⁰Baldissera at that period did not serve as governor of the colony although he behaved as such. He was the head of the Italian armed forces in Africa with broad powers and he had the first and the last word on the issues of Eritrea. He had the power to issue laws and to even expel anyone that seemed to be opposed to the Italian dominion. See Eteocle Cagnazzi, *I nostri errori, tredici anni in Eritrea. Note storiche e considerazioni*, (Turin, 1898), pp. 86, 192-193. Thus is illustrated the military's domination over the politicians in the colony and the latter's pushing aside.

⁷¹The colony cost 114,300,793 lire for the period from January 1885 until June 1891. 109,179,174 weighted upon the War Ministry and the rest upon the Maritime and the Public works ministry. *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁷²Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 300-301. Tax oppression and the draining of the resources of the colony's residents did not cease with Gandolfi being replaced by Baratieri in the administration of the colony. The replacement had come about because of the fall of the di Rudini administration and the ascension of Giolitti's government (15 May 1892).

Cagnassi who, with the connivance of the governors of Eritrea, had murdered until 1891 12 noblemen and 800 indigenous people under the mere suspicion that they would desert and potentially betray the Italians.⁷³ When the Italian authorities ordered the conduct of an investigation, the two criminals disappeared. The results of an investigation conducted during April and May 1891 compromised Rome and put it in a difficult position. The perpetrators were sentenced for 16 of the 800 alleged murders and were never arrested. The only ones found guilty and punished accordingly were two officers of the native police corps. The military officers and the governors Orero and Baldissera were not convicted for "few abuses". The latter admitted during an interview: "It is true that I ordered the execution of 8 or 10 natives without asking the verdict of the martial court" since the colony "was not at all calm". He added: "It was necessary to invoke terror to keep those barbarians subjugated." As for the future of Ethiopia: "the goal to reach [...] is the seizure of the entire Ethiopia; the means: the roman style military colony. Abyssinia has to be ours because this is the destiny of the inferior races: the blacks vanish little by little and we bring the civilization in Africa not for them but for us."⁷⁴ The sweet-sounding proclamations about justice and equality were meaningless in practice since the law not only did not treat equally the Italians and the Africans but allowed the former to treat the latter like their animals.⁷⁵ The colony besides a prolific region full of prospect and hope for the Italians was also a place of abuses, torture and ill-treatment for the natives. These facts have been questioned and denied by some historians who claimed that justice was impartial, the abuse incidents were limited, and the executions, always after a trial, justified.⁷⁶

Someone would expect that these grave incidents were sure to arouse the anticolonial outcry and fierce accusations from the socialist, republican and radical deputies. Unfortunately, as the parliamentary discussion about the African expenses of 29 April-6 May 1891 reveals (196 for and 38 against) the left wing of the parliament was fragmented and unable to form a concrete common front against the nationalist-africanists.⁷⁷ Even their emblematic leader Turati an ardent advocate of isonomy and self-determination argued that for reasons of prestige and since Italy has already spent 120 million lire there, Eritrea should not be abandoned. The socialists plunged deeply into Italian social issues and they overlooked the misery and degradations taking place in Africa. In practice many of them were not opposed to expansionism; they felt uneasy about the state's expenditures and only assaulted the government's policies to politically oppose Crispi's despotic regime. The Marxist

⁷³Sisti, *Lotte sociali in Eritrea*, p. 29.

⁷⁴Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p.441

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 436-437. Angelo Del Boca in his revealing book *Italiani brava gente? Un mito Duro a morire* has treated in detail the issue of the Italian colonial administration's impunity and brutality on the indigenous. In this book he describes the miserable detention conditions of the indigenous held as political prisoners in the Nocera island prison, during which most perished by hardships and punishments, demolishing the myth of the "milder" and "well-intentioned" Italian colonial rule compared to that of other nations.

⁷⁶De Stefani, *Adua nella storia e nella leggenda*, pp. 219-220.

⁷⁷Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp.439-440.

theorist Antonio Labriola (1843-1904) also did not rail against the colony and the exploitation and oppression that it was standing for. On the contrary, he gave rise to the socialist colonialism concept, proposing that Eritrea should become an experiment of de facto socialism and collectivization.⁷⁸ Martini who was a Deputy at the time, asserted: "Whoever says that we have to civilize Ethiopia is lying. We have to substitute race for race: either this or nothing [...] to our work the native is a hindrance; well, we have to, willingly or not, hunt him, help him to vanish, like elsewhere the redskins, with all the means that civilization, instinctively hated by him, has to offer: the recurrent cannon and the long lasting brandy."⁷⁹

The land management issue has to be addressed with explicit attention since finding arable land for Italy's redundant proletariat class was the much advertised incentive of the early Italian colonialism. The inaugural law of January 1890 was deemed as unpractical and was abolished in September 1891. The three member advisory council made decision making more complicated and did not guarantee the orderly communication of each respective part. The agriculture and commerce advisor had to address the issues of: defining state property, encouraging commerce, agriculture and industry, keeping secure the trade routes and stipulating agreements with the colony's neighbouring tribes. The authority to conclude agreements was later (29 September 1890) transferred to the Governor. This occasion led to the creation of the Colonization Office. Still the establishment of a new civil authority in Eritrea did not result in the complete revocation of the military one as Scarfoglio revealed on 5 January 1890. Thus the simultaneous coexistence of the military and the civil authority cancelling each other out, was maintained. Besides Crispi himself admitted on 23 April 1890: "It has never been my intention [...] to institute in Eritrea a purely civil government [...]." A fact that even Menelik was well aware of; on 26 March 1890 he wrote: "The government that sits in Massaua is a soldiers' government [...]."⁸⁰

According to the royal ordinance of 19 June 1890 the experienced⁸¹ Deputy Leopoldo Franchetti was appointed the first colonization commissary. His position's subordination to the Governor's office would create many obstacles and controversies as his challenging task, finding suitable outlet for Italy's ever growing population, required the utmost degree of support and autonomy. On the contrary Governor Orero, not willing to allow Franchetti a free hand on a series of colonial policies, attempted to hamper his powers by creating two corresponding offices to weaken his authority.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 363

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 455.

⁸⁰Rossini, *Italia ed Etiopia*, p. 25.

⁸¹In 1876 alongside Sonnino he surveyed the conditions of Italy's internal colony, Sicily and published his findings. See Alberto Aquarone, "La ricerca di una politica coloniale dopo Adua. Speranze e delusioni fra politica ed economia" in *Publications de l'École française de Rome*, no. 1, Vol. 54 (1981), p. 299.

Crispi believed that Eritrea had to provide arable land so that the emigration wave would be channeled into the Italian Africa.⁸² Thus, the specialist on agricultural affairs Franchetti was sent to the colony. According to the relative decree he was authorized to secure land for agricultural purposes, to intervene where he deemed necessary and to enter into agreements with the natives.⁸³

The occupation of Keren and Asmara in 1889 meant Eritrea's expansion to the fertile Ethiopian plateau and its definite orientation towards a policy of obtaining cultivable land. Commander Pietro Toselli (1856-1895), a resolute believer in the "moral duty of the civilized nation to drag the inferior one towards progress" commented on the subject: "our firm occupation of a point in the Abyssinian plateau corresponds to an economic need of the colony; it gives us a way to effectively practice surveillance and [exercise] sovereignty upon the friendly tribes; [it] facilitates the recruitment of irregular troops, whose build up will permit the diminution of the European troops; [it] provides for the health needs of the occupation army; and [it] preserves the commercial roots of the colony with the mainland. All this without great military risks."⁸⁴

Some sporadic investigative inquiries on the land tenure methods forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs set the wheels in motion. Crispi immediately (November 1889) pressed the War Ministry to formulate the general lines for this type of concessions while Baldissera had declared a month earlier that every previous transaction without Rome's consent concerning the colony's estates between Europeans or natives were considered void. The land was to be reserved for Italian private or collective agricultural activities as a way to relief the demographic-economic problem of the metropolis, since between 1887 and 1891 approximately 717,000 Italians were estimated to have left their country. Naturally, before that, a series of issues regarding the provisions of the lease had to be settled. For this purpose in November 1889, months before his formal appointment, Franchetti was sent to Massaua in an exploratory mission. As a result of this brief research he shaped a positive opinion about the colony's economic development⁸⁵ but he also stressed his concern in regard to the confiscation of the natives' property; their land was to be reserved for the Italian immigrants. Ultimately it was decided that the colony's government would have the responsibility of determining which terrains could be offered for cultivation to the natives and under which conditions. Since this obstacle

⁸²Perticone, *L'Italia in Africa, la politica*, p. 34. Crispi stressed: "Eritrea has to be principally an agricultural colony and it is necessary to support the initiatives of individuals, granting them land and encouraging and assisting them in working and cultivating...". See Carlo Matteoda, "Il pensiero dei pionieri sulla valorizzazione economico-agraria della colonia Eritrea" in *Atti del primo congresso di studi coloniali v. VI sezione V: economica-agraria*, (Florence, 1931), p. 335.

⁸³Rainero, *I primi tentativi di colonizzazione*, pp. 12-13.

⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 30-34.

⁸⁵Franchetti was convinced that Eritrea held encouraging prospects and could absorb part of Italy's immigration flow. See Leopoldo Franchetti, "L'Italia e le sue colonie", conference held in Venice in 28 March 1914 and Milan in 4 April 1914, (Rome, 1916), p. 9.

had been taken care of, Franchetti undisrupted devoted himself to his first colonizing experiment. It consisted of dividing 1000 hectares to 50 farms and offering them and the requisite equipment to 50 Italian families (presumably to carefully chosen families of ex servicemen) that were to administer the entire estate in a military manner.⁸⁶

An example of the collective capitalistic agricultural activity that was implemented in Eritrea was the "Società Reggiana per l'Africa".⁸⁷ Five Italian entrepreneurs having previously accumulated a capital of 25,000 lire instituted the aforementioned association with the intention of obtaining vast stretches of land from the colonial government free of charge. Subsequently they would implement a type of intense cultivation mobilizing the local labour force under Italian direction⁸⁸ After agricultural experiments and relevant studies produced satisfying results the association formally requested the concession of 5 thousand hectares in Keren on 28 February 1890. Deputy Franchetti, distrusting this kind of large scale "capitalistic" ventures urged Rome to reject the proposed plan altogether. Having been deprived the government's moral support the disenchanted members dissolved the association and left the colony. Franchetti after the assumption of his duties as the agriculture and commerce director initiated studies on the colony's most fertile region, Asmara and promoted the idea of a proportionally small-scale colonization at the area, encouraging individual "proletariat" settlements at the expense of massive capitalistic enterprises. He strived to reserve the most fertile land for the incoming families and provide them with favourable conditions, such as perpetual land ownership, as he was particularly averse to a policy that would lead to the potential establishment of latifundia and could destabilize the entire colony. By claiming the apparently abandoned land and by interfering with the local land ownership system known as Shehena or Diesa, Franchetti inevitably infuriated part of the native population. De Zerbi in 1890 prophetically warned that the land-man relation in East Africa was so crucial that any effort to separate them would threaten the very foundations of the

⁸⁶The desirable type of the immigrant was that of the soldier-colonist who would defend the colony when the need arose, according to the government's orders. See Stefano Bellucci, "Colonial Ideology versus labour reality: a history of the recruitment of Italian workers to the colony of Eritrea, 1890-1940s" in *Labor History*, 55/3, p. 299.

⁸⁷ The agricultural village of Nuova Peveragno was in contrast a result of the spontaneous action of one man and not a product of the coordinated state policy. When Major General Balisera ordered Captain Pietro Toselli to lead his squad in a scouting mission near Saganeiti, the latter had the idea to put his "workforce" to use and built a small-scale colony with a view to growing cereals. He achieved it with the assistance of his Italian and irregular soldiers; he named the village after his birthplace. Baldisera validated the village's foundation with a decree on 15 November 1889, see Rainero, *Pietro Toselli, un peveragnese nella storia*, p. 35.

⁸⁸Most of the time, cheap native workforce was preferred by the entrepreneurs and colonial military authorities, a fact that led the Italian construction (roads, ports, railways) workers, that came to the colony in search of employment to protest to the government and ask its intervention in 1900. Many of them remained unemployed and had to repatriate. In 1899 when a private company sought to start a coffee plantation in Eritrea, instead of Italian work force, it "imported" and employed 25 workers from Yemen, who were reputed to be more experienced in growing coffee. See Bellucci, "Colonial Ideology versus labour reality", pp. 296-298.

Italian colonialism.⁸⁹ Franchetti was also quite unreasonably worried that Greek entrepreneurs, through possibly French bank loans, would end up owning the colonial property.⁹⁰

Among other provisions the June 1890 parliamentary law provided for the concession of state land, previously declared as available by the government to private citizens and associations for agricultural reasons. None of these concessions could exceed the limit of 10,000 hectares; as for the associations it was explicitly emphasized that they could not maintain possession rights for more than fifty years. Franchetti was placed as the director of this endeavour; he was entitled to negotiate with the petitioners and cede up to 100 hectares. In the case of larger terrains he had to consult with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Finally he was granted extended powers to facilitate the completion of his task, a fact that irritated the colony's new governor Gandolfi, who as a man of a military background was eager to reduce the Deputy's autonomy.⁹¹

Under the act of the 25th of January 1891 the authority of the General Secretary for civil affairs was placed under the governor's jurisdiction, whereas Franchetti was at the head of the colonization office as he was appointed the colony's Agricultural Counselor. The reestablishment of the respective authorities was not able to eliminate the antagonism between Gandolfi and Franchetti. Franchetti pressed on with his proposals anyway. By classifying the land in two categories, in terrains for the indigenous and terrains for the Europeans he acted in favour of the natives and immigrants alike. He also proposed the concession of 30 hectares and 2,000 lire to every immigrating family, an amount that was to be gradually repaid to the state. It goes without saying that the governor harboured diametrically opposing ideas. It is also obvious that the new governor Baratieri (28 February 1892) maintained his predecessor unrelenting line.⁹²

This quarrel, the Cagnassi-Livraghi scandal, the financial situation of the colony and the precarious balance between the politica tigrina and the politica scioiana put Eritrea in upheaval. Di Rudini's, sound administration and efforts to reduce the colony's running costs did not manage to restore tranquility in Eritrea. This is why, on 12 November 1891 a 12 member royal commission, was appointed with the purpose of investigating the real conditions of the colony and report on them to the parliament.⁹³ The commission reached Massaua, to assess the colony's agricultural

⁸⁹ Yemane Mesghenna, *Italian colonialism: a case study of Eritrea 1869-1934. Motive, Praxis and Result*, (Lund, 1988), p. 108.

⁹⁰ Rainero, *I primi tentativi di colonizzazione*, pp. 48-56. The Greek merchants, active in Massaua, Zeila and Harrar were rumoured and actually were, up to a certain degree, collaborators and informants of the French. See Pietro Felter, *La vicenda africana 1895-1896*, (Brescia, 1935), p. 16.

⁹¹ Rainero, *I primi tentativi di colonizzazione*, pp. 61-62.

⁹² Ibid., pp. 68-75.

⁹³ Salis, *Storia e politica coloniale*, p. 61.

potential and concluded that Eritrea not only could be economically viable and autonomous, but above all it could absorb the Italian immigration flow. These goals would be achievable as long as: the colony maintained its current boundaries and harmonic relations with its "neighbours", the communications were secure, the colony's revenues were invested in public works, the private initiative was promoted, a technocratic civilian government was introduced, justice and personal liberty were guaranteed, a rationale regime regarding estate property was founded, the agricultural experiments were continued and an agricultural society composed by landowners was created. The commission furthermore, concluded that the colony was still in no position to accommodate large numbers of Italian immigrants since the basic infrastructure for their subsistence was absent. The commission's members studied the soil, carried out experiments in Asmara, Gura and Godofelassi (February 1891) and sided with the governor, highlighting the need to promote both state sponsored and spontaneous-individual immigration simultaneously.⁹⁴

On 15 May Giolitti succeeded di Rudini. The new Foreign Minister Brin on 29 June 1892 entrusted to another special committee, in which Franchetti participated, the assessment of the land property and the terrain concession methods in the colony. Although on 19 January 1893 its estimations and proposals were approved by governor Baratieri, he never seemed to take them in consideration. By then used to the hostile conduct of the military element, Franchetti at last implemented his immigrant influx project. On 16 November 1893 the first nucleus of immigrants arrived and settled at Godofelassi, Asmara and Gura.⁹⁵ The colonization office provided them with a subsistence amount in advance (to be repaid with a 3% yearly interest) and granted to each family, depending on the age, gender and number of family members, from 8 to 25 hectares under the condition that they would remain there and cultivate the land for a duration of 5 years.⁹⁶ Subsequently, the estate's ownership would be legally transferred to them permanently. The government was obliged to supply the immigrants with drinkable water, means of production, equipment and medical, religious and educational services. On the other hand the families had to procure for themselves a starting fund of 2,500-3,500 lire in order to cover the first "expenses of establishment".⁹⁷ The auspicious arrangement of these families, ten in total, consisting of 29 men, 15 women and 17 minors in Eritrea motivated a jubilant Franchetti to exclaim that "the immigration in the Eritrean plateau will become, after the end of the experimental period, dense enough in a short time". His optimistic expectations about the colony's future and his views clashed with Baratieri's standpoint on the colonization question and caused Franchetti's resignation. Thus the Governor managed to concentrate in his hands the relative authority and with his 25 April 1895 decree to consolidate his ideas, as well his personal ambition. He assumed the

⁹⁴Matteoda, "Il pensiero dei pionieri", pp. 335-357.

⁹⁵ASMAE, ERITREA, envelope 4, folder 9, n. 1312, Venanzio, 14 April 1895.

⁹⁶Aldo A. Mola, *L'imperialismo italiano-La politica Estera dall'Unità al Fascismo*, (Rome, 1980), pp. 54-55.

⁹⁷Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *Amministrazione civile*, p.30.

complete direction of the matter and demoted the Colonization office, which became a subordinate secondary institution under his oversight.⁹⁸ He managed to obtain Rome's approval for his plans; he founded 5 new offices: the predominant politico-military office, the central administrative office responsible for the budget and taxes, the office of civil affairs responsible for the telegraphic, customs, hygienic, religious and educational function, the office of state lands and the legal office run by the fiscal lawyer of the colony.⁹⁹ He imposed a police state and put himself on the top of it. He organized the native military forces (Ascaris),¹⁰⁰ he issued laws on religion, public law and state property and he got involved with the colony's fortifications and defense works. Thus, he transformed Eritrea to his personal dominion and created for himself a 10,000 army to use essentially at his will.¹⁰¹

According to Baratieri's views the commander had to be the colony's decision maker and the sole person in charge. He also maintained the view that the land in question should be leased or sold to anyone that could afford it. In contrast with Franchetti's organized plan, the new governor acted as he saw fit, expropriating land from the indigenous inside and outside the colony's borders and making them reminisce the days when they were under Ethiopian or Egyptian rule.¹⁰² Baratieri bearing in mind the security of the dominions and not the efficiency of the production or the fair distribution of the land undermined the activity of Franchetti's Office of Colonization and, being responsible for every matter of Eritrea, issued his own simpler rules regarding the concession of terrains. Franchetti's system was more complex; according to him the director of the colonization office should have enjoyed the same institutional rank as the royal commissaries and should have had absolute control over the State Property Office (Ufficio Demaniale),¹⁰³ the Concessions Office and the Land Register Office (Ufficio del Catasto). Furthermore, he classified the

⁹⁸Rainero, *I primi tentativi di colonizzazione*, pp. 123-135.

⁹⁹Massimo Gaibi, *Manuale di storia politico-militare delle colonie italiane*, (Rome, 1928), p.69.

¹⁰⁰In 1881 the first nucleus of irregulars (Ascaris) light soldiers was recruited by the Italians in Assab. Five years later, in April 1886 Saletta recruited 200 of them. They were considered a more economical solution compared to the deployment of regular troops, more adaptable to the tropical condition and more expendable. After the withdrawal of the Egyptians from Massaua, the 900 Ascaris previously in their service were recruited by General Genè and were employed as workforce, escorts, guards and in a series of short campaigns around the city. On 28 September 1888 Baldissera organized the 3,500 Ascaris of the colony in four battalions and forced them to follow Italian language courses. Similarly their 95 Italian officers had to learn Arabic. On 30 June 1889 the Ascaris constituted officially an infantry regiment as an integral part of the Italian army and on 11 June 1891, during the Gandolfi administration, a royal decree proclaimed them as Royal African Troops. See Marco Scardigli, *Il braccio indigeno. Ascaris, irregolari e bande nella conquista dell'Eritrea 1885-1911*, (Milan, 1966), pp. 8-50 and Cesare Cesari, *Contributo alla storia delle truppe indigene della colonia Eritrea e della Somalia Italiana*, (Castello, 1913), pp. 5-13. For more information see Ruggero Tracchia, *Coloniali e Ascaris*, (Milan, 1940).

¹⁰¹Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp.491-492.

¹⁰²Stefano Poscia, *Eritrea, colonia tradita*, (Rome, 1989), pp. 19-20.

¹⁰³This office nationalized at the expense of the natives, 19,020 hectares of Eritrean land in 1893 and 280,039 in 1894 for various Italian projects. See Sisti, *Lotte sociali in Eritrea*, p. 39.

arable areas into: family estates (up to 20 hectares), permanent concession lands, temporary concession lands, leased fields and lands for which permission for temporary farming was issued. Certain rules and size restrictions should apply for the potential buyers. In comparison Baratieri's system appears to be more simple and capitalistic whereas Franchetti pushed forward for a methodic, more scientific colonization under the state's protection. In any case Baratieri abolished the Colonization Office on 30 June 1895.¹⁰⁴

The resolution of the migration-demographic problem, one of the ideological pillars of Italian colonialism, was abandoned permanently in 1895 and did not preoccupy the Italian decision makers again in the 19th century. The organized on a scientific basis settlement of immigrants that Franchetti was pushing through demanded funds, which the Italian government was not prepared to make available and thus stimulus was given to the voluntary settlement-colonization (*colonizzazione libera*).¹⁰⁵ According to other scholars, Franchetti's programme was doomed to failure from the beginning because of the drought, the unsuitability of the terrain, the lack of means and the coordinated reaction of the natives. The failure cannot be interpreted solely as a personal antipathy or a lack of co-operation between Gandolfi and Franchetti as the next governor too, undermined the work of the latter. The problem had deeper roots. It concerned the eternal struggle between the political (*civile*) and the military (*militare*) element in the colony and the prevalence of the latter over the former. The Italian bureaucracy and militarism prevented the completion of a project that was beneficial for the country. Eritrea was run by the military, oriented towards expansion and war, concealed as "civil government". The military in Massaua and Rome did not consent to the intervention and the coexistence of the political factor in the colony; there could be no coexistence between these two opposing trends. The militaristic inclination of the Italian colonialism meant that all the proclamations about peace and civilization were hypocritical and designed only for the domestic audience, since in practice the Italians went to Africa with the aim of fighting, conquering and subjugating. The two incidents, the systematic homicides and the "land" quarrel were cited in an attempt to disclose the objectives and the real intentions of the Italians in the framework of their colonial venture. It is now obvious that the fanfares about justice, security, and governing according to the law were cheap ideological constructs of the Italian side in an attempt to justify its expansion at territories on which it did not have any right.

As the Italo-Ethiopian war was still raging, Yohannes turned its attention against the irregulars of Sudan. In Metemma, on 8 March 1889, the Ethiopian army suffered a terrible defeat by the Mahdists and the emperor was killed to the great sadness of the Ethiopian people, Menelik excluded. Without delay, he gathered troops, occupied the ancient capital of Gondar and was proclaimed King of Kings on 25 March 1889. Antonelli, who for years was cultivating friendly relations with the

¹⁰⁴ Rainero, *I primi tentativi di colonizzazione*, pp. 138-141.

¹⁰⁵ Negesh, *Italian colonialism in Eritrea*, pp. 35-36.

king of Scioa aiming at privileges and the increase of the Italian influence, was witnessing his policy triumph. Thus, delighted and equipped with a new treaty¹⁰⁶ he met Menelik, now emperor, at Wachale or Ucciali in Italian, where the most controversial agreement of the Italian colonial history was signed on 2 May.¹⁰⁷ The treaty of "mutual peace and friendship", the first concluded by Menelik as emperor and an equal of King Umberto, contained favourable provisions for both sides.

Rome was recognizing Menelik as emperor of Ethiopia and guaranteed to him, with article 6, his unhindered supply through the Italian colonial territory. The Italians with article 3 were pocketing the Hamasen province and were expanding their influence even deeper in the Ethiopian hinterland.¹⁰⁸ According to article 19, the treaty would be translated in Italian and in Amharic, official language of Ethiopia, and the two "versions" would have the exact same effect and importance. However, the most important point is the contested article 17. The Ethiopian text acknowledged to the emperor the possibility to communicate with foreign governments through the Italian government. The corresponding part of the Italian text meant that Menelik was obligated to make use of the Italian services.¹⁰⁹ A state that consigns its diplomatic relations to the government of another state is automatically equaled to its protectorate.

Antonelli in a deceitful and pathetic manner, attempted to fool Menelik, who did not speak Italian, in the hope that by the time his stratagem was revealed Italy would be in such a position of diplomatic power internationally that the emperor would be forced to accept the *fait accompli*.¹¹⁰ Being unaware of the danger, Menelik sent to Italy his cousin Maconnèn Uoldemicaèl (1852-1906) to negotiate the details of the Ucciali agreement. He met with Crispi in Naples, who again recognized Menelik as emperor of Ethiopia in exchange for the acknowledgement of the Italian interests in the Red Sea.¹¹¹ At Naples the issue of a common currency for Ethiopia and Eritrea, the establishment of an Italian bank in Addis Ababa and a loan of four million lire to Ethiopia were agreed. The loan would be provided by the Banca Nazionale with an

¹⁰⁶ The two men had signed in the past other agreements too. On 25 May 1883 the treaty of "friendship and trade" between Scioa and the Kingdom of Italy and on 20 October 1887 with utmost secrecy the agreement of "friendship and alliance" against Yohannes. See Paulos Milkias, "The battle of Adwa: The historic victory of Ethiopia over European colonialism", in *The battle of Adwa, Reflections on Ethiopia's historic victory against European colonialism*, ed. P. Milkias, M. Getachew, (New York, 2005), pp. 95-96.

¹⁰⁷ Scovazzi, *Assab, Massawa, Ucciali*, p. 118.

¹⁰⁸ The two governments condemned with article 14 slaveholding, as a practice contrary to Christian ideals, and with article 8 recognized to the Italians in Ethiopia and to the Ethiopians in Italian territory the possibility to acquire immovable property and to conduct transactions unimpeded. See Sillani, *L'Africa Orientale Italiana*, p. 31.

¹⁰⁹ Pankhurst, *Ethiopians*, pp. 181-182.

¹¹⁰ Marcus, *History of Ethiopia*, p. 89.

¹¹¹ On the occasion of this visit the newspaper *La Riforma* recorded that Ethiopia owed a lot to Italy that brought peace, civilization and progress in a troubled region with its honourable actions. See *La Riforma*, "L'Italia in Africa", Thursday 29 August 1889.

interest of 6%; until its repayment Italian authorities would collect the proceeds of Harar's customs. With article 10 of the supplementary treaty, Menelik and the subsequent Ethiopian leaders were bound to respect the regulations in question.¹¹²

Within 10 days from the signing of the treaty, Crispi, impatient and excited, had notified all the European capitals that Menelik would settle all his issues with them through the Italian government. It is noteworthy that he referred to Menelik as king of Ethiopia and not as emperor, as he was officially recognized by the treaty. In accordance with article 34 of the General Act of the Berlin conference he communicated the developments insinuating the imposition of a protectorate on Ethiopia without making use of the term.¹¹³ The term protectorate was not of course included in the treaty of Ucciali or in its supplementary of Naples. Most European governments unreservedly accepted Crispi's declaration and acknowledged that this manipulation automatically meant the loss of Ethiopia's independence. By the time Maconnè returned from Italy, Menelik had already begun to discover Antonelli's cheap ruse.¹¹⁴

The British and the German government replied to the telegrams that the emperor had sent to the crowned heads of Europe, inviting them to attend his official coronation ceremony, that they could not accept messages from him directly but only through the Italian government.¹¹⁵ Menelik, dumbstruck by the replies, was immediately backed by the governments of France and Russia, which at the time had already laid the foundations of their future alliance, claiming that the Italians had not announced with clarity the imposition of the protectorate nor were they in a position to control effectively such a vast area.¹¹⁶ Menelik encouraged, implemented a policy of co-operation with Paris and made known to the Italian government in February 1893 that he would denounce the treaty internationally.¹¹⁷ In June 1894 he did so but only after he had received the munitions and armaments promised to him by Rome, as an attempt to appease him. France naturally, never recognized the treaty of Ucciali and continued through the colony of Djibouti and its governor Léonce Lagarde (1860-1936) to strengthen militarily and diplomatically Ethiopia.¹¹⁸ Paradoxically, Italy in an attempt to appease the emperor sent more weapons and ammunitions than any

¹¹² Pankhurst, *Ethiopians*, p. 182.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

¹¹⁴ Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali*, p. 77.

¹¹⁵ Pankhurst, *Ethiopians*, p. 185.

¹¹⁶ Marcus, *History of Ethiopia*, p. 90.

¹¹⁷ On 12 February, by dispatching a letter to Umberto I, he denounced and unilaterally annulled the treaty. See Milkias, *The battle of Adwa*, p. 48. He also sent letters of protest to Paris, Berlin, Vienna and Saint Petersburg. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXV, (Rome, 1998), p. 245.

¹¹⁸ Count Antonelli accused openly Paris for allegedly offering 40,000 rifles to Menelik during the Italo-Ethiopian clash, see Lamar Middleton, *The Rape of Africa*, (London, 1936), p. 159. Other than munitions, Paris was supplying Ethiopia with postal-telegraph equipment and provided the possibility to issue Ethiopian currency in French mints. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXVI, (Rome, 1999), p. 418. Russia as well was sending munitions to Menelik, see Luigi Federzoni, *A. O. Il posto al sole*, (Bologna, 1936), p. 39.

other Power. This armament would be turned against its supplier with mathematical certainty.¹¹⁹

France, amid a tariff war with Italy, was appearing as protector of the Ethiopian independence whereas diplomatic support to Addis Ababa was offered by Switzerland, Greece, Belgium, Russia and Denmark.¹²⁰ France has been battling the Italian interests in Scioa for many years¹²¹ and its Press was propagandizing and inveighing against the Italian action in Africa.¹²² A rare speck of understanding appeared during the French-Italian talks about the demarcation of their respective spheres of influence in Eastern Africa in May 1891. When di Rudini declared the renewal of the Triple Alliance in June, Paris broke off the negotiations, proving that Paris' benevolence in Africa was merely a machination to inflict cracks and rifts to the menacing coalition.¹²³ The Italians suspected French involvement and support to "anarcho-liberal" movements taking place within the country aiming to undermine the government.¹²⁴ Menelik reciprocating the support he was receiving, granted to the French a license to construct a railway from Djibouti to Harar, which would render the Italian railway linking Massaua with Tigre practically useless.¹²⁵ The economic interests of Paris¹²⁶ in Ethiopia and the opposition to any movement of the British or of their mouthpieces in the area,¹²⁷ was sufficient to convert the French into Rome's sworn enemies. Under the framework of their common policy of expelling the British from the strategically important Eastern Africa the French and the Russians attacked the Italian interests too. The frequent attacks of the French press against Crispi, the threats, the protracted customs' war, the abuse of Italian workers in France,¹²⁸ the supply of Ethiopia with modern war material and the burdened past excluded any

¹¹⁹ Milkias, *The battle of Adwa*, pp. 94-95. The more rigid the Ethiopian stance was becoming the greater the "discounts" the Italians were making on their claims. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXVII, (Rome, 2000), pp. 667-669.

¹²⁰ Carlo Zaghi, *I Russi in Etiopia*, (Naples, 1972), p. 20. The French proposed to Menelik to undertake Ethiopia's representation in Europe and thus to defend its independence and interests. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXVI, (Rome, 1999), p. 180.

¹²¹ ASMAE, ASMAI, position 1/4, folder 26, Assab, 17 July 1882.

¹²² The French newspaper *Journal des débats* attacked the Italian military action against Ethiopia. The Italian "La Tribuna" responded that the French should not interfere in Italian internal affairs and should refrain from supporting financially Menelik. See La Tribuna, "La situazione nel Tigre", 3 January 1895.

¹²³ Rossini, *Italia ed Etiopia*, pp. 40-41.

¹²⁴ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXIV, (Rome, 1996), pp. 224-225.

¹²⁵ Miège, *L'Imperialismo coloniale Italiano*, p. 61.

¹²⁶ The French were trying to divert the whole of Ethiopia's commercial activity to Djibouti, to the detriment of the Italian influence. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXV, (Rome, 1998), pp. 282-283.

¹²⁷ Paris was convinced that Rome was acting as London's stooge. See Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 1 série (1871-1900), tome VII, 23 February 1883-9 March 1890, (Paris, 1937), p. 549.

¹²⁸ Because of the frequent abuses in this tense period, 4,000 Italians were forced to abandon their occupation and homes in France. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXIV, (Rome, 1999), p. 263.

possibility of political co-operation between the two sides.¹²⁹ Italian consultants were no longer admitted in the imperial court after French instigation while French missionaries had been already expelled from the Italian dominions, as already mentioned.¹³⁰ The Italian diplomats daydreaming, believed that there was no reason for concern as the German speaking allies were being indifferent to the issue, Britain had accepted the protectorate and Russia seemed "passive". The only loose end therefore was to find the golden mean with Paris, while the Ethiopian factor did not seem to be taken into account!¹³¹ Thus it was during this inopportune time that the Italian decision makers did not hesitate to request, the concession of Djibouti as compensation for the Italian relinquishment of Tunisia and their recognition of the French protectorate there.¹³²

The most surprising fact is the factual and dynamic Russian involvement in the matter. Nikolay Stepanovich Leontiev (1862-1910), a Russian military officer who participated in several missions to Ethiopia, promised Menelik that he would mobilize the whole of Europe against Italy and that his country would declare war to Rome.¹³³ As a matter of fact, between 1879 and 1899 three Russian missions arrived in Ethiopia with military, medical and scientific goals. The Russian penetration crystallized into the construction of hospital units, pharmaceutical depots, and dispatches of military advisors, instructors and armaments.¹³⁴ At the time there were mentions of imposing a spiritual protectorate in Ethiopia or at least establishing a Russian colony in the Red Sea, the new Moscow, as a naval trading centre, a mainstay for the Russian trade in the East. The news that Russian troops would be recruited voluntarily to serve in Ethiopia, probably in a policing role, caused concern to Rome.¹³⁵ The support to Addis Ababa and the refusal to accept the Italian allegations about a protectorate are interpreted in one manner: the Franco-Russian agreement was not aiming just to halt the Italian influence in Ethiopia. Its target was the British interests and the indirect weakening of the Triple Alliance, which was threatening and putting Paris' and Saint Petersburg's positions in Europe at risk.

The only ones who apparently still supported or tolerated the Italian policy were the British. They were promoting diplomatically the Italian positions and were collaborating with Rome because of the fear of an Italo-French understanding. When Italy during the fighting with the Mahdists raised claims in Sudan, the bilateral

¹²⁹ Carlo Zaghi, *L'Africa nella coscienza europea e l'imperialismo Italiano*, (Naples, 1973), p. 297.

¹³⁰ Miège, *L'Imperialismo coloniale Italiano*, p. 61.

¹³¹ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXV, (Rome, 1998), p. 340.

¹³² Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXI, (Rome, 1968), pp. 541-542.

¹³³ Zaghi, *Etiopia*, p. 87.

¹³⁴ Between 1898 and 1906 Russian doctors had received 145,569 and had attended to 59,819 patients in Ethiopia. See *Ibid.*, p. 273.

¹³⁵ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXI, (Rome, 1968), p. 239. Such rumours were not usually valid and were probably the result of Italian panic, such as the news of the Cossacks' "threatening" immigration from Russia to Ethiopia in 1886! See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XX, (Rome, 1988), p. 323.

relations experienced an unprecedented coldness, compared to the admirable collaboration of the years 1884-1885.¹³⁶ In spite of whatever reservations, the *chargés d'affaires* of the two states clarified and divided the respective spheres of influence in Eastern Africa on 27 September 1890.¹³⁷ The British acknowledged the Italian interests in Ogaden, Somalia, Kassala and the Ethiopian regions. In addition, besides the recognition of the protectorate, the British stipulated three more protocols with the Italians, with which they were guaranteeing the individual interests and their African dominions' borders on 24 March 1891, 15 April 1891 and 5 March 1894 respectively.¹³⁸ Furthermore London, via Salisbury, allowed the use of the port of Zeila by the Italian Army, when the latter was working on a plan to surprise and flank the Ethiopian army.¹³⁹ The moment Menelik was informed about these machinations he consigned a letter to Europe's sovereigns and governments proclaiming the independence of his country and defining his realm's frontiers: from the upper Nile to Somalia and eastwards up to the Red Sea's coastline. Menelik's declaration was most welcome for Crispi; after all it farther extended the borders of Rome's protectorate.¹⁴⁰

Menelik, the former ally and collaborator of the Italians, began to tighten his ties with his vassals, seek allies, equip his army and approach the European governments. Both parties directly involved, had realized that confrontation was inevitable and were preparing as best as they could for the upcoming clash. The colony of Eritrea, in a state of war, and the Empire of Ethiopia were now seeking a pretext, even an insignificant one, to finally resolve their differences.¹⁴¹ Strangely enough, the Italians were the ones who rendered the treaty of Ucciali a dead letter by advancing beyond the agreed borders during Maconnen's stay in Naples.¹⁴² There were many in Ethiopia accusing Menelik of treason because, irrespective of article 17, the treaty officially ceded Ethiopian territories to the Italian colony. The emperor had made some modest concessions but refused to concede the boundary of Mareb that Rome explicitly demanded. In reality, Menelik immediately after his ascension to the throne in 1889 and amid pandemics and famine in his country was not in a position to resist the demands of his hitherto benefactors. His first task was the consolidation and recognition of his rule and after that the expulsion of those preying on Ethiopian independence. He may have been the head of an impoverished and war torn state but

¹³⁶Zaghi, *Etiopia*, p. 148. London after the Italian occupation of Sudanese areas began to distrust and to view with concern their intentions in Eastern Africa, intentions which might come into conflict with the British interests there. The British were not willing to go along with Crispi's "aggressive policy" and "hysteria". See Zaghi, *L'Africa nella coscienza europea*, pp. 280-285.

¹³⁷Edoardo Scarfoglio, *Viaggio in Abissinia, nascita del colonialismo italiano*, (Palermo, 2003), pp. 64-66.

¹³⁸ Pankhurst, *Ethiopians*, p. 185.

¹³⁹ Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 710.

¹⁴⁰Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp.410-411

¹⁴¹Marcus, *History of Ethiopia*, pp. 91-92.

¹⁴²While the Ethiopian side was negotiating whether or not the Italian borders would reach Asmara, general Baratieri captured Sarae, Hamasen and Barca, probably convinced that a subject nation could not challenge the clause of *Uti Possidetis*. See Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 354.

that did not mean that he had to consent to every Italian request. Besides, as the Emperor of Ethiopia he could rally more than 100,000 men under his banners in times of need. Equally important is the fact that by then he possessed a powerful modern arsenal.

Instead of being prudent someone could claim that the Italians did everything in their power to infuriate Menelik. The new governor Orero, organized and carried out his plan of capturing Adwa, the capital of the Tigre region. Wanting to achieve a success for the Italian arms on the 26th of January 1890, the anniversary of Dogali, and without consulting Rome, he ordered 5,000 metropolitan and native troops to violate the Ethiopian frontier. He recalled his troops shortly thereafter, without achieving anything more than making a demonstration of power, offending the Ethiopian patriotism and overriding his superiors. In addition, while Menelik was unwilling to recognize the Mareb boundary for the Italian colony, Orero, disregarded the protocol and approached Mangascia, the governor of Tigre in order to promote the Italian demands.¹⁴³ As this was not enough, the colony's authorities were backing morally and materially the tribes that revolted against the newly crowned emperor.¹⁴⁴ As an act of reconciliation Rome sent to Scioa the diplomat Augusto Salimbeni (1847-1895) in June 1891 with the impossible task of convincing Menelik to accept the Italian seizures and article 17 of the Ucciali treaty. When he failed he was replaced by the man that for years cultivated cordial relations and exerted influence in Scioa, Antonelli. He stated that Italy had to proceed to the temporary occupation of the territory up to the river Mareb for pacification reasons and he even accused the Ethiopian interpreter for the misinterpretation of article 17. As a result by February 1891 Menelik had banished every Italian from his court.¹⁴⁵ The following diplomatic missions fared no better.

On 28 February 1892 upon Gandolfi's departure his vice governor Baratieri assumed the rule of Eritrea. Likewise, when Giolitti fell from office on 15 December 1893 on account of the full-blown crisis in the economy and in Sicily with the Fasci insurrections, the overweening Crispi took charge once again. Even though Baratieri was nominated by di Rudini, he and Crispi complemented and admired each other. They formed a duet that would prove to be explosive and disastrous for Italy. The first fruit of their special understanding was at Sudan's expense. In December 1893 a 10,000 strong Sudanese army invaded the colony's territory but was repelled with heavy losses. Baratieri after consulting only with Crispi and overstating the impending danger launched an attack on Kassala, one of the operation centres of the Mahdists in Eritrea's northern region. On July 17 1894, after a skirmish, the Italo-

¹⁴³Rossini, *Italia ed Etiopia*, p. 62. Between 6 and 8 of December 1891 the convention of Mareb took place in Adwa. Mangascia conceded the Mareb frontier, an act of minimal value, was recognized as the ruler of Tigre and allied himself to Rome. Italy did not achieve much, as only Menelik could negotiate the boundaries of Ethiopia as per the Ucciali treaty. Moreover, when Mangascia did not receive any material support from the Italians, he realigned himself with Menelik against them in June 1894.

¹⁴⁴Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp.367-379

¹⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 389-401

eritrean forces breached, plundered and burned the city in a civilizing mission against the afro-arabian obscurantism as the governor perceived it. It was not a preventive or a punitive attack. The region was annexed and the half destroyed city fortified. Internationally it provoked the British distrust and resentment, as the region was geostrategically important to London; militarily it was a mistake since it contributed to the further dispersion of the Italian forces (the colony was initially 86 square kilometers and now it surpassed 150) and commercially it did not make any sense seeing that Sudan was the most destitute zone of Africa.¹⁴⁶ It appears that this was an expansion for the sake of expansion, the practical articulation of aggressive instincts and colonial atavism.

As has been seen, the commanders of Eritrea Gandolfi and Baratieri did not espouse the Franchetti model,¹⁴⁷ an organized and reasonable manner for the management of arable lands. The expropriation of the land of the indigenous in order to be given to the Italian settlers without a system and the heavy taxation, which served mostly the military purposes of the colony, displeased the local populations. Even the most faithful and well-intentioned collaborators of the Italian administration after the loss of independence, of property and of the right to exploit land started to become distrustful towards it.¹⁴⁸ In theory, the Italian sovereignty would ensure the prosperity, the security and the fundamental rights of Italians and Africans. In practice it was based on racism,¹⁴⁹ exploitation and oppression, as every other colonial authority.

Bahta Hagos (unknown-1894) was the lord of Acchale Guzai in Tigre and until then a collaborator of the Italians.¹⁵⁰ Outraged by the stolen property and the violation of the rights of his people, he rose up against the Italian colonial power on 14 December 1894. Moved by the looting of his people's land, the contempt, the oppression, the taxes and the unreasonable prohibitions, he declared at the eve of his uprising: "I have liberated you from the government that came from the sea to strip

¹⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 512-516.

¹⁴⁷ In January 1896 a new wave of 128 Italian colonists, mostly from Friuli, arrived to Eritrea but due to the strained war situation they had to settle in Asmara in the colony's interior where they would be safer. See Ibid., pp. 614-615.

¹⁴⁸Rosoni, *La colonia Eritrea, la prima*, p. 161.

¹⁴⁹ "The blacks are like children: they love when they are fearful." See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXV, (Rome, 1998), p. 443. Moreover, "an alliance between a dominant race and a subjugated race is not possible." See A.C.S., Carte Crispi/510, folder 89/3, 3 January 1888. Menelik remained unwavering in his denouncement of the treaty with a firmness and steadfastness that impressed the Italian diplomats, who did not expect "such a resolve by a people of colour on proposals such as this." See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXV, (Rome, 1998), p. 441. After Adwa the colonialists, failing to explain otherwise the victory of the coloured over a European army, "discovered" that the Ethiopians were Caucasians who, as a result of their exposure to the tropical sun, had become Negroes! Whilst up until recently they were treated as barbarians, now in the eyes of some whites they seemed civilized and progressive! See Marcus, *History of Ethiopia*, p. 100.

¹⁵⁰ Bahta Hagos was considered one of the most loyal collaborators of the Italians. Among other things, he had fought alongside them against the Mahdists. See ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/8, folder 55, report Operazioni per la difesa della colonia, Massaua 25 January 1895, p. 7.

you, to take your land, to prohibit the cultivation of the land [...] to prohibit the lumbering of the woods". Together with other prominent lords he asked Menelik's forgiveness for his earlier defection and took up an armed struggle against the conquerors.¹⁵¹ Moreover he reached out to Mangascia and the Mahdists, aspiring to organize a campaign that would drive back the European peril.¹⁵² The rest of the Tigre lords seemingly were maintaining friendly relations with Baratieri, but at the suggestion of the emperor, they were conspiring against the Italian presence in Eritrea. Bahta Hagos besides carrying out acts of sabotage against the Italian colony, he engaged in skirmishes with the Italian troops, ultimately though he was defeated.¹⁵³ In December 1895 Baratieri, who with his land tenure measures had pushed the natives to revolt, sent Toselli beyond the borders of the colony, to mop up the remaining revolutionary pockets. After killing the leader of the uprising on 18 December (Battle of Halai), he finally squashed every hotbed of resistance, violating however, once again the Ethiopian frontier.¹⁵⁴ As if that were not enough the Italian troops advanced in neighbouring Tigre, where they seized the holy city of Adwa and engaged in skirmishes with the remnants of the insurgent units that had now resorted to guerilla tactics. The Italian government recalled Baratieri to Rome, realizing the recklessness of his policy. This development however, did not prevent the annexation of the Tigre province to Eritrea.¹⁵⁵ After 6 years of sporadic clashes, the occupation of Adwa was the event that roused Menelik and convinced him that he had to mobilize the entire nation against the Italian threat. As far as the revolution of Bahta Hagos is concerned, it can be claimed that the oppression of the indigenous and the erroneous land policies led Rome to the Tigre invasion, the overextension and the deadly trap of Adwa.

Crispi showed slow reflexes to the diplomatic frenzy that was developing against the Italian plans and did not realize in time the turn for the worse and the danger that threatened Rome. The insistence on two parallel but incompatible policies, one focusing on European balance which advocated the participation to the Triple Alliance, the other aiming to expanding in Africa, were preventing Rome to realize that it had got into a difficult and disadvantaged position.¹⁵⁶ The easy victory of the Italian army at the battles of Senafe and of Coatit, on 13-14 January 1895, against the insurgent forces of Mangascia, made the military command of Eritrea even more reckless and arrogant. In their mind these victories had proved to the world and "also to the barbarians that we are strong and powerful."¹⁵⁷ During Baratieri's visit to Rome in order to exert pressure and obtain supplies, money and reinforcements he was received with honours proper to a national hero. The africanists were delighted,

¹⁵¹Bandini, *Gli Italiani in Africa, storia delle guerre coloniali*, p. 93.

¹⁵²Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp.523-526.

¹⁵³De Jaco, *Di mal d'Africa*, pp. 273-274.

¹⁵⁴Brunialti, *Le colonie degli Italiani*, pp. 492-493.

¹⁵⁵Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali*, p. 81.

¹⁵⁶Zaghi, *L'Africa nella coscienza europea*, pp. 230-237.

¹⁵⁷Miège, *L'Imperialismo coloniale Italiano*, p. 55.

the parliament promoted him to the rank of lieutenant general and the King rejoiced: "the Italian army's victories in Coatit and Senafe consist a new triumph of civilization against barbarity". Despite Sonnino's arguments on the financial burden of the state budget, Crispi backed up the general, en route to the elections (26 May-2 June 1895), since the Prime Minister was in desperate need of new victories, conquests and diversions. In his April 1895 telegram he prohibited Baratieri from abandoning any place previously occupied by the Italian forces and urged him to push forward, to Tigre.¹⁵⁸ Baratieri's right hand man in Africa, officer Tommaso Salsa (1857-1913) attested: "No other place in Africa and I would say in the world can be available, like Abyssinia, for the relocation of our excessive population and it would be a great error if, in front of an expense of few millions, Italy were to lose many certain advantages". This assessment was espoused by the upper classes and reflected their viewpoints at the time of the expansionist paroxysm. Baratieri after a meeting with Crispi, the Minister of the Treasury Sonnino and Foreign Minister Alberto de Blanc (1835-1904) obtained promises concerning the dispatch of two battalions in Eritrea, an enlarged war budget of 14 million lire and the right to enlist further regiments from the colony's native population. Blanc revealed his pro-colonial views during a parliamentary debate on 14 June 1895. On that occasion he assured the deputies that the government intended to make Eritrea an asset for the motherland, that Kassala was acquired as an act of solidarity to the British and that the capture of the province of Tigre would contribute to the security of the colony.¹⁵⁹

The colony certainly could not cover the grave expanses of a protracted war without resorting to state sponsorship. In 1893-1894 the expenses of the colony were estimated to 8,700,000 lire of which some 7 million were dedicated to military related expenditures. In 1894-1895 Eritrea's revenues were estimated to approximately 1.5 million lire deriving from customs' fees, taxes, proceeds from the postal and telegraphic services, tributes. The fiscal year 1895-1896 the colony registered 1,634,000 lire of revenues and expenses of 1,731,000. Despite the predictions and the official calculations, during the warring period the actual spending rose to roughly 15 million annually, a burden shared principally by the War and Shipping Ministries. Minister Sonnino lamented the state budget registering a deficit of around 50 million lire each year. The financial black hole of Eritrea exacerbated the situation. Between 1882 and 1895 colonial spending, including Somalia, accounted for precisely 180,312,040 lire; in 1898 it reached the astonishing amount of 370,868,000. Crispi in the aftermath of Coatit congratulated Baratieri and urged him to proceed to the mainland since "it would be negligence" not to, but the rest of the cabinet was well aware of the country's financial limitations.¹⁶⁰ Someone could argue that if the thorny

¹⁵⁸Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 354-545

¹⁵⁹Ibid., p. 583. Tigre was highly valued by the Italian military thinkers because of its strategic position and its reputation as the birthplace of fearless soldiers. With some investments its salt production could be profitable and the nucleus of the future Italian empire. See ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/8, folder 59, report *Produttività economica del Tigre*, Rome 24 May 1895, pp. 1-6.

¹⁶⁰De Stefani, *Adua nella storia e nella leggenda*, pp. 55-63, 95.

problem of the campaign's financing and by extension the main obstacle of the Italian colonialism was somehow resolved Rome would have put forward a plan of unfathomable expansion towards the Ethiopian mainland. Judging though from its limited financial, military and administrative capabilities the safest course of action was the renunciation of the protectorate and further expansion, the reconciliation with Menelik and the beneficial lasting peace.

The debacle at Amba Alagi, on 7 December 1895, when 30,000 Ethiopians under Maconnèn isolated and annihilated every single one of Major Toselli's 2,300 men, was suppressed and did not trouble the Italian leadership to the extent that it should have.¹⁶¹ After all the Italian nationals that perished numbered just 40 soldiers and officials. The plan of Ethiopia's conquest was not formulated by the Italian government and parliament but it was the result of Crispi's discussions with Baratieri.¹⁶² The former without being aware of the situation in Africa and being unable to curb his impatience urged the general to mobilize and to attack: "In your hands lies the honour of Italy and of the Monarchy", "time is running out to the benefit of the enemy" and "the government has sent you everything you asked in men and weapons. The country is expecting another victory and I expect it to be an authentic one, one to settle once and for all the Abyssinian issue. Be careful of what you do. It involves your honour and the dignity of Italy."¹⁶³ After the defeat the parliament approved (158-36) Crispi's plan for total war and the reinforcement of the colony. In vain Costa backed up by protestors attacked Crispi for his manipulations and lies, exalted the fraternity between nations, supported Ethiopia's right to exist and denounced the mandatory civilizing with "the stick".¹⁶⁴ Internationally, the Amba Alagi defeat was greeted with enthusiasm by the Russian and the French press whereas the allied German and Austrian ones sympathized with Italy's latest humiliation.¹⁶⁵

Arrogant and certain of the upcoming success of the Italian arms the Prime Minister had already drafted the peace treaty that he would enforce upon Menelik. In accordance with it, the province of Tigre would be annexed to Eritrea, Harar would be converted into an Italian protectorate, and the country's foreign relations would be

¹⁶¹ Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale*, pp. 8-9. The *L'Osservatore Romano*'s editor blamed the government's policy and Baratieri, who failed to install an efficient espionage network in Eritrea and did not support Toselli with reinforcements. See "Gli Ultimi Fatti in Africa" *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 285, Tuesday-Wensday, 10-11 December 1895, pp. 1-2.

¹⁶² Zaghi, *L'Africa nella coscienza europea*, p. 261.

¹⁶³ Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, pp. 718-719.

¹⁶⁴ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 602-603.

¹⁶⁵ For the *L'Osservatore Romano*'s editor the allied press was morally backing the Italians who "like the Hebrews before them were the chosen people" venturing in the Red Sea. See "Amici e Nemici", *L'Osservatore Romano*, num. 59, Thursday, 12 March 1896, p. 2. The Italo-Ethiopian war was quite similar with the almost concurrent Sino-Japanese war as a "more civilized people desired also to enforce itself upon a less European people"! See "Le Eventualita", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 48, Thursday-Friday, 27-28 February 1896, p. 1.

controlled by Rome while an Italian "adviser" would be installed in Addis Ababa.¹⁶⁶ Crispi defended the validity of the treaty and was seeking the punishment of the Ethiopians defectors, who, in his own world view, owed obedience and submission to Rome.¹⁶⁷ His inordinate, to the limits of paranoia, passion prompted him to propose the capture of the French dominions in the Red Sea, i.e. the start of a European war to cut off Ethiopia's resupply. Fortunately, his German and Austrian allies proved more reasonable and rejected the plan. Even though Kálnoky, the representative of Austria-Hungary had every reason to push Italy towards Africa, away from the contested Adriatic, he did not wish to involve his country in the Italo-French conflict.¹⁶⁸ Prince Chlodwig Carl Viktor Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst (1819-1901), the German Secretary of Foreign Affairs, was also not excited about the prospect of an African war with severe consequences in Europe, which would certainly weaken Italy and by extension the Triple Alliance.¹⁶⁹ Baron de Blanc added his voice to those who were arguing that Italy must withdraw from an alliance that did not offer any support to colonial matters.¹⁷⁰

The last noteworthy clash before Adwa, took place in January at Mek'ele where the Italian garrison of 1,300 men was put under siege for 45 days by the Ethiopian forces. Due to the exhaustion and the lack of munitions and water they surrendered the fort and retreated.¹⁷¹ Menelik, in all probability, acted with magnanimity in order to drag the Italian side to the negotiation table. Even at the

¹⁶⁶Marcus, *History of Ethiopia*, p. 97. The full draft of the peace treaty consisted of the following: the return of Tigre to Eritrea, the recognition of the Italian protectorate over Harar, the assumption by Rome of the control of Ethiopia's foreign relations and army, the forbiddance to make concessions of territories without the Italian consent imposed on the Negus and the Ras, the installation of an Italian "adviser" in Addis Ababa, the appointment of provincial governors in the empire after Italian approval, the expulsion of anyone impersonating an Italian citizen in Ethiopia, the imposition of fiscal and customs control by Rome, the establishment of the Italian penal system, the prohibition on concluding loans without Italian permission imposed on the Ras and the Emperor to, the issue of Ethiopian currency only by Italian mints, the possibility for the Italians to acquire immovable property at any part of the country. In case of an emergency the Ethiopian army had to rush and defend Eritrea. Also Italy was not bound by any agreement of the Ethiopian government that preceded Ucciali, was securing the throne to the emperor and his successors, was resolving the disputes of the local lords of Ethiopia and was assisting in the economic and social growth of the country. The one detail that prevented Italy from implementing this plan was a decisive, victorious battle over Menelik. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXVII, (Rome, 2000), pp. 542-544.

¹⁶⁷ The Italian diplomats could not comprehend why the Ethiopians had denounced the treaty of Ucciali, given that they had signed it and seemed to have accepted it: Maconnen had requested Italian mediation to resolve the border issue with the British in Harar, whereas Menelik himself had maintained that in case of emergency Italian mediation would be required while conversing by telegram with the Queen of England in March 1896. Furthermore, he had sent a letter to the Italian Foreign Minister requesting the protection of the Ethiopian monastery of Jerusalem and the representation of his country in the 1890 Brussels conference by the Italian *chargés d'affaires*. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXIII, (Rome, 1995), pp. 490-491.

¹⁶⁸Zaghi, *L'Africa nella coscienza europea*, pp. 275-276.

¹⁶⁹Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, p. 713.

¹⁷⁰Zaghi, *L'Africa nella coscienza europea*, p. 279.

¹⁷¹Marcus, "Imperialism and expansionism in Ethiopia from 1865 to 1900", p. 435.

eleventh hour Italy's fate had not been sealed. After negotiating with Menelik Antonelli, who was now vice secretary of the Foreign Ministry, advised the Italian government to accept the treaty in its Ethiopian version until more favourable conditions were presented. Crispi however, insisted on the imposition of the protectorate since any other solution would compromise Italy's honour and prestige. Menelik having the numerical and strategic advantage in the field seemed inclined to negotiate whereas Baratieri and Crispi amidst worrisome developments (desertions of Ascari and revolts in the army's rear) were always disdainful of the Ethiopian determination to resist and of their military capabilities and presumed that the negus was just stalling. The negotiations finally broke down in February with the sole culpability of the Italian Prime Minister.¹⁷² The press that was favourable to Crispi described the siege as a heroic episode where in "a perimeter of 700 meters the prestige of the Italian army but also the valour of the nation were defended." Every other voice was practically silenced by the totalitarian Prime Minister: the dissident journalists were expelled from Eritrea, soldiers' mail was withheld and Baratieri's reports were off limits for deputies and even government Ministers.¹⁷³

The Italian army of Africa numbered 30,000 Italian white soldiers and 15,000 Askari. With these forces Baratieri overpowered the Mahdists in Agordat, on 20 December 1893, and occupied the province of Kassala in July 1894, as has been already mentioned. At Adwa, on 1 March 1896, this army would have a clearly much more difficult task against 100,000 war-experienced, motivated and well-equipped men of the emperor. The Italian army fortified defensively expecting to fend off with ease the uncoordinated and disorganized attack of the Ethiopians. When this did not happen Baratieri under severe pressure and urged on by his overconfident generals ordered his army to advance. The lack of communications, of maps of the area and of proper logistics, the belief that an European army could not possibly be defeated by Africans, the underestimation of the enemy, the lack of terrain reconnaissance, the false information that the Ethiopian "allies"¹⁷⁴ were spreading in the Italian camp caused the disaster. The Italians columns, misguided, with no idea of the enemy's positions, size and fire-power were soon outflanked. The skillfully executed flanking attacks against the Italian flanks and the courage of the Ethiopian soldiers, who were fighting for the protection of their homeland, brought about the collapse of the Italian front.¹⁷⁵ The remains of the Italian army¹⁷⁶ took refuge in Eritrea, where they fortified themselves. Another 2,700 (1,900 Italians and 800 Ascari) were made prisoners.

¹⁷² Marcus, *History of Ethiopia*, p. 93.

¹⁷³ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 628

¹⁷⁴ The nominally loyal African chieftains "betrayed" Italy on 12-13 February, in away similar to how the Piedmontese forces had tried to approach the pontiff's guards in September 1870. See "Defezioni e Tradimenti", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 41, Wednesday-Thursday 19-20 February 1896, p. 1.

¹⁷⁵ Marcus, "Imperialism and expansionism in Ethiopia from 1865 to 1900", pp. 436-437.

¹⁷⁶ The losses of the Italian army in the battlefield were estimated at: 261 officers, 2,918 soldiers and 2,000 Askaris dead, 471 wounded Italians, 954 missing and 959 wounded Askari. These casualties amounted to 3/5 of the entire force. See Luigi Goglia-Fabio Grassi, *Il colonialismo italiano da Adua all'impero*, (Bari-Rome, 1993), p. 191.

Menelik instead of pursuing the retreating Italians and attempting to capture Massaua participated in a thanksgiving religious ceremony and declared a day of national mourning. Lord Salisbury, witnessing the Italian defeat that would jeopardize the British interests in the area ordered the Egyptian army in Sudan to march and "relieve the pressure on the Italians" on 12 March.¹⁷⁷ London's colonial and foreign offices were startled by Menelik's victory and afraid that he may attack the British possessions in Somalia and Sudan-Egypt in an anti-European crusade.¹⁷⁸

Even at that time a devastated Crispi was planning feverishly a second campaign, gathering troops at the port of Naples,¹⁷⁹ but the Italian people humiliated and discouraged, demanded the disengagement from the African front.¹⁸⁰ Suddenly, ordinary citizens realized that they were being systematically deceived by their government and that the newspaper articles about exploits and successes had nothing to do with reality. The infuriated mob turned against the culpable, the Crispi government, and went so far as to chant slogans such as "Viva Menelik", "Abasso Crispi" (down with Crispi), "Abasso gli africanisti" and "Abasso l'esercito" (down with the Army). In Naples the police could not control the thousands of demonstrators and at Pavia the mob, by putting up barricades, prevented the passage of troops to the ports.¹⁸¹ Heavy clashes took place in the same city and at Milan heated incidents led to the loss of human lives. Arrests, demonstrations and clashes with the police took place in all the major cities: Turin, Milan, Cremona, Ferrara, Palermo, Rome, and Ancona. The crisis took such proportions that the king feared the total collapse of the institutions and of the monarchy.¹⁸² The newspapers supporting Crispi were bluntly accusing Baratieri for the disaster. The rest of the press urgently demanded the recall of the troops and the Prime Minister's resignation. The outcry, the strong reaction from the public and the lack of support by the Crown led to the fall of the Crispi government on 5 March 1896 and to the assumption of power by di Rudini five days later.¹⁸³

The new Prime Minister, in contrast with Crispis' megalomania, followed, the "politica di raccoglimento", a "mild" and prudent policy for Eritrea. In accordance to the new policy, any act of hostility towards Ethiopia had to be avoided, any cause of friction had to be eliminated, the protectorate claim was nullified and the military

¹⁷⁷ Marcus, "Imperialism and expansionism in Ethiopia from 1865 to 1900", p. 439.

¹⁷⁸ Middleton, *The Rape of Africa*, p. 174.

¹⁷⁹ The last contingent departing from Naples had the honour to be greeted by King Umberto with the following words: "the land where you are going to has become sacred by the blood of your brothers, it is not unknown to you. On it you will still find alive the echo of our victories, of our virtues' memories, of valour, of sacrifice. It is up to you to imitate the glorious examples." See Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 702.

¹⁸⁰ Theodore M. Vestal, "Reflections on the battle of Adwa and its significance for today" in *The battle of Adwa, Reflections on Ethiopia's historic victory against European colonialism*, ed. P. Milkias, M. Getachew, (New York, 2005), pp. 26-30.

¹⁸¹ Milkias, *The battle of Adwa*, p. 64.

¹⁸² Battaglia, *La prima Guerra*, pp. 794-796.

¹⁸³ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 704-706.

expenditures of the colony had to be reduced.¹⁸⁴ Also, a diplomatic reconciliation with Paris was attempted.¹⁸⁵ The reduction of costs was of paramount importance since the amount of 15 million per annum for the colony during the Crispi period, was a burden hard to bear for the Italian economy. So it was decided to increase the taxation and to reduce the garrison forces of Eritrea.¹⁸⁶ Di Rudini did not seek to avenge the defeat¹⁸⁷ and to give continuation to a conflict that, besides its dignity, had cost Italy 200 million lire. Despite his conciliatory program, announced on 17 March, di Rudini just a week later asked with a bill 140 million lire from the parliament to be spent on military preparations in case that the peace negotiations broke off. After Baratieri was put on trial on 5-14 June, and subsequently found as "incompetent", if not downright guilty, by the military court of Asmara, the new Prime Minister nominated general Baldissera as the new colonial governor. Having at his disposal more than 40,000 men and 1,300 officers and aspiring to make amends for the defeats, he engaged immediately the Mahdist forces threatening the north frontier of the colony.¹⁸⁸

Rome's chargé d'affaires Cesare Nerazzini (1849-1912) arrived in Addis Ababa on 6 October 1896 and after 21 days of negotiations signed in the name of the King of Italy, a peace treaty with the Empire of Ethiopia. Italy recognized the Ethiopian independence, annulled the treaty of Ucciali and undertook the obligation to concede Eritrea to Ethiopia in the event that its abandonment was decided by the Italian parliament; on 22 May 1897 the deputies rejected Eritrea's relinquishment with 222 voting against the proposed liquidation and 140 for.¹⁸⁹ The amount of the indemnity and the definition of the new borders were to be determined "in a friendly manner" within the following year according to the treaty's article number four.¹⁹⁰ The prolonged negotiations were complicated. Menelik asked the new treaty to be written in French as well to avoid a new Ucciali, a large reparation since Italy was the

¹⁸⁴Ibid., p. 464. Ever since November 1891, when diplomat di San Giuliano (Antonino di San Giuliano 1852-1914), presented his programme to the parliament, the option of a prudent colonial policy was available. Its aim was to make the colony self-sufficient and to provide an outlet for the Italian immigration, maintain good relations with its neighbours, ensure communication with Sudan, improve infrastructure, promote private business initiatives, guarantee freedom, justice and good governance, continue the studies about the agricultural potential of its terrain, introduce a single land regime and pave the way for the reception of settlers-landowners. See Ibid., pp. 450-451.

¹⁸⁵As already seen, in September 1896 the di Rudini government officially recognized the French occupation of Tunisia and two years later, in November 1898 a commercial treaty between the two sides, ending the protectionist measures was signed. See Giancarlo Monina, *Il consenso coloniale, Le società geografiche e L'Istituto coloniale Italiano (1896-1914)*, (Rome, 2002), p. 27.

¹⁸⁶Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXIV, (Rome, 1996), pp. 109-110.

¹⁸⁷The Italians, in some respects, had been entangled in Africa to avenge the death of Bianchi and Giulietti. Afterwards they campaigned to avenge Dogali and finally to avenge the defeat at Amba Alagi. The question is how many more lives had to be lost for this pointless and painful vendetta. See Goglia-Grassi, *Il colonialismo italiano da Adua*, p. 72.

¹⁸⁸Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 712.

¹⁸⁹Zewde Dejazmach Gabre-Selassie, "Continuity and discontinuity in Menelik's foreign policy", in *The battle of Adwa, Reflections on Ethiopia's historic victory against European colonialism*, ed. P. Milkias, M. Getachew, (New York, 2005), pp. 128-130.

¹⁹⁰Federica Guazzini, *Le ragioni di un confine coloniale. Eritrea 1898-1908*, (Turin, 1999), p. 11.

aggressor and another 12 million lire for the release of the Italian prisoners. Nerazzini in his part claimed that Italy had lost a battle not the war and since the Ethiopians did not occupy any Italian land paying compensation was out of the question.¹⁹¹ The single benefits that Rome extracted from the peace treaty was the return of the 1,900 Italian prisoners¹⁹² for a total of 4,5 million lire and the assurance that Nerazzini elicited from Menelik that he would not accept the protection of any other Power. Additionally, the two men signed a commercial treaty on 24 June 1897 that mutually guaranteed the most favourable nation clause, provided for the exchange of diplomatic representatives and obligated both governments to improve the commercial routes between their respective possessions.¹⁹³

In Italy on the day after the disaster the voices about withdrawing from Africa (ritiro dall'Africa) were growing at the expense of the "war in-depth" supporters (guerra a fondo), who were demanding to take revenge and to defend the Italian honour. On the opposite end, the socialist deputies demanded all together the abandonment of the colony or its sale to a private company. The more moderate suggested the adoption of a pacifist line of action in regard to the policy that Eritrea had to follow in the future.¹⁹⁴ What is certain is that di Rudini and the Crown were not prepared to abandon the colony definitively.¹⁹⁵ According to the newspaper *Messaggero* on 10 March 1896: "We were wrong to go to Africa, but now that we are there, we have to remain and to remain firmly, otherwise we will make such a miserable, such a wretched impression as a nation, that we will become the laughing

¹⁹¹ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/14, folder 108, Rome 14 March 1897.

¹⁹²The Russian officer Leontieff, who was considered by the Italians as an outright enemy, after negotiations with the Ethiopian authorities led 47 Italian prisoners on his own initiative to freedom. See ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/15, folder 113, Djibouti, 2 August 1896. Similarly Pope Leo XIII (Vincenzo Raffaele Luigi Pecci 1810-1903) sent a humanitarian expedition to the suffering prisoners and addressed a letter to Menelik in which he pleaded for the release at least of those soldiers that descended from the territory of former Papal state. See Giovanni Tedone, *I ricordi di un prigioniero di Menelik, dopo il disastro di Adua*, (Rome, 1915), pp. 100-101. In addition, the Italian immigrant communities at every corner of the globe, moved by the misfortune of their compatriots sent money and supplies to the relatives of the Adwa victims, see ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/13, folder 95, Porto Alegre 18 November 1896.

¹⁹³Alberto Aquarone, "La politica coloniale italiana dopo Adua: Ferdinando Martini governatore in Eritrea", in *Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento*, 62/3 (July-September 1975), p. 374.

¹⁹⁴As a result of the new prudent policy, the Sudanese province of Kassala was restored to Britain on 22 December 1897. See Vestal, *Reflections on the battle of Adwa*, p. 30. Before the conclusion of the agreement the negotiations took several months. Di Rudini was asking 175,000 lire for the cession and demanded that the British-Egyptians occupy at once the city in order to avoid a potential mahdist invasion. Foreign Minister Salisbury claimed: "I have often been pestered by people who wanted to get something, but never before have I seen people in such a hurry to give up something". See Mesghenna, *Italian colonialism*, p. 123.

¹⁹⁵Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 83. In contrast to di Rudini's declarations, and despite the previous agreement with Ethiopia, the Italian diplomat Dal Verme traveled to Brussels on 10 March, to ascertain King Leopold's disposition about acquiring part or the entirety of Eritrea. The project was aborted due to the defence issue, the colony's security from external dangers question and the probable British discontent. See Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 738.

stock of Europe and we will no longer find a Power to take us seriously" and "our honour enforces us to avenge our fallen brethren in Africa." According to the view that was echoed by di San Giuliano and Sonnino, "we will never be able to protect our prestige in Europe if we let ourselves be defeated in Africa".¹⁹⁶

Italy was practically the only European country to come out at a loss from the Partition of Africa, in which it had participated to earn the respect of the other Powers. According to Sonnino not only it did not acquire prestige but it "somewhat lowered itself in the world's estimation."¹⁹⁷ Italy had not spread civilization in Africa but had exported its own underdevelopment. Either way the conquest of Ethiopia was an objective incompatible to the Italian recourses and capabilities.¹⁹⁸ The long-standing dream of an Italian empire was wiped out within a few hours in the hills of Adwa, giving a resounding slap and inflicting a powerful shock mainly to the pride and the psyche of the Italian nationalists. The successful war and the conquest of Libya in 1911 would free Rome from the burden, the disrepute, the guilt and the syndrome¹⁹⁹ of Adwa.²⁰⁰ 15 years had to pass before the Italians would dare to fully reactivate themselves dynamically and autonomously in the colonial arena. In any case, on 13 December 1906 di San Giuliano and the representatives of Britain and France did agree to respect the Ethiopian integrity, but they made provisions for the distribution of the country into spheres of influence.²⁰¹

The unforeseen victory of Ethiopia over European colonialism had a massive impact in the world. The success gave hope, pride, inspiration and an example to all the peoples who were under foreign domination. Adwa became a symbol of equality and justice against subjugation and racism. The joint resistance of Muslim and Christian Ethiopians in defence of the ancestral lands sent a message of unity and defiance. The victory promoted the idea of Africa's freedom, as Japan's victory over Russia in 1905 had respectively promoted the independence of Asian peoples. Menelik's success practically meant the recognition of the independence of

¹⁹⁶ Goglia-Grassi, *Il colonialismo italiano da Adua*, pp. 55-73.

¹⁹⁷ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 83.

¹⁹⁸ Italy was not dragged into a regional colonial war in Africa but to a full scale war against a powerful foe. See "Italia e Etiopia", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 40, Tuesday-Wensday 18-19 February 1896, p. 1.

¹⁹⁹ The publication *La Vita Internazionale* characterized the Italians as "losers, defeated in Adwa, squealers constantly on strike and above all an incompetent and resigned population." Only after the conquest of Libya the Italians began to demonstrate some vigour. See Gentile, *Grande Italia, the myth of the nation*, p. 67.

²⁰⁰ Goglia-Grassi, *Il colonialismo italiano da Adua*, pp. 57-59. The Italian fascists' perception that the Ethiopian issue was still pending led to the Italo-Ethiopian war of 1935. The suffering caused by the Italians in the area, did not end with their departure in 1941, as a result of their defeat in the Second World War. The arbitrary borders carved out by the Italians in 1890, "constructing" and creating a new nation by severing Eritrea from Ethiopia, would pose a problem for Addis Ababa, until the 20th century. The constructed national conscience and the falsified diversity of the inhabitants of Eritrea, which had been promoted by Rome for its own benefit led to the bloody war between Ethiopia and independent Eritrea in 1998-2000. See Vestal, *Reflections on the battle of Adwa*, pp. 32-33.

²⁰¹ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 770.

his country from all the Powers.²⁰² On 30 January 1897 he concluded with France a secret defence treaty against the common British peril in Eastern Africa. Menelik also recognized the port of Djibouti as Ethiopia's official trade outlet and reaffirmed his support to the 1894 French plan for the establishment of a Djibouti-Addis Abeba railway.²⁰³ On 14 May 1897 London recognized Ethiopian independence, settled the border issue between British Somalia and Ethiopia with Menelik, formulated a common policy against the Mahdists and signed a commercial treaty.²⁰⁴ Istanbul, Saint Petersburg as well as the Mahdists rushed to sign treaties of trade and friendship with Addis Ababa. Furthermore, Ethiopia was not just situated along the route to India but placed at a strategic position, valuable for the Europeans, across the German axis of interests between Cameroun-Zanzibar and the French one between Congo-Djibouti.²⁰⁵ In this way Ethiopia not only remained independent during the Scramble for Africa but it also elicited favourable settlements from the colonial powers. Its borders were safeguarded and recognized in 1897 by the British and the French, by the Italians in 1900, by the Anglo-Egyptians in Sudan in 1904, and by the official administration of British Kenya in 1908.²⁰⁶

Crispi has always been antagonistic and openly hostile towards France and an ardent advocate of the Austro-German-Italian alliance. His fall from office, as a result of the Adwa disaster meant that a fruitful Italo-French rapprochement was now feasible. The reconciliation, after two decades of tariff war, political clashes and rancour affected the colonial field as well. Indeed, Foreign Minister Venosta reached an agreement with his French counterpart Théophile Delcassé (1852-1923) first verbally in June 1898 and then officially in December 1900. Rome was free to act in Libya whereas Paris would enjoy a "free hand" in Morocco. In regard to the Italian colonial policy in general, it was now evident that structural and radical changes were necessary. It was perhaps wiser for Rome to return to the familiar Mediterranean or to expand commercially in North and South America. The increase of the Italian influence in the Balkans and the Middle East also offered financial and political benefits. Albania or Libya were certainly feasible prizes and more obtainable than Ethiopia. In any case, approaching Ethiopia, through economic penetration, industry and commerce could bring more tangible results.²⁰⁷ In relation to Adwa a new period dawned for Eritrea. The Italian decision makers were puzzled about which direction the colony should finally follow: exploiting raw materials (*colonia di sfruttamento*), colonization (*di popolamento*), agricultural settlement (*colonizzazione agricola*) or commercial penetration (*penetrazione commerciale*)? ²⁰⁸ The question of partially

²⁰² Giampaolo Calchi Novati, "Da Asab alla colonia Eritrea: formazione di una nazione o invenzione del territorio?" in *Colonie africane e Cultura italiana fra Ottocento e Novecento. Le esplorazioni e la geografia*, ed. C. Cerreti, (Rome, 1994), p. 16.

²⁰³ Marcus, "Imperialism and expansionism in Ethiopia from 1865 to 1900", p. 440-444.

²⁰⁴ Marcus, *History of Ethiopia*, pp. 103-104.

²⁰⁵ Gianni, *Italia e Inghilterra*, p. 84.

²⁰⁶ Pankhurst, *Ethiopians*, pp. 193-194.

²⁰⁷ ASMAE, ASMAI, position 3/11, folder 89, Milan 7 January 1897.

²⁰⁸ Aquarone, "La politica coloniale italiana dopo Adua", p. 350.

abandoning the colony's territory, retaining only Massaua as an open port or converting it into a displacement colony was also on the table.²⁰⁹ After Adwa the legal status, function and future of the colony were uncertain.²¹⁰ The eventuality of abandoning Eritrea for which money and blood had been shed, was finally rejected by the Di Rudini government. The desired and most acceptable option was the conversion of costly Eritrea into a colony self-sufficient economically and militarily.

The status of the colony was officially altered after the passage of the new organic law in 1898, which in practice replaced the military administration with a "civil" one. The civil commander of the colony was dependent only on the ministry of Foreign Affairs and was responsible for the exercise of executive power. Nominated with royal decree on 30 November 1897 the new civil governor or "special royal civil commissary" of Eritrea, Martini, sailed from Naples on 29 December.²¹¹ Upon arrival he found that he had to completely reorganize the administration and that he had to enforce order, discipline and most of all frugality. Inspecting the facilities he discovered camps and buildings of military use capable of accommodating 30,000 men and huge quantities of useless products.²¹² As if that were not enough, the economic value of Eritrea was minimal while the continuous disappointments were exceeding Rome's hopes and initial ambitions by far; Massaua's commercial traffic was mediocre.²¹³ There were no funds for the modernization of the agricultural production and the strengthening of the industry, whereas the cultivation of coffee and cotton was not profitable and efficient. Besides, according to, rather exaggerated estimates of the era, 7/10 of the colony's expanses were covered by desert. Finally, it did not possess raw materials and after 25 years of Italian domination it was nothing more than a "title of expenses without significant corresponding financial and political

²⁰⁹ Luigi Capucci, "La politica italiana in Africa", *Nuova Antologia di scienze, lettere ed arti*, n. 154 (August 1897), p. 549.

²¹⁰ Domenico Primerano, "Che cosa fare dell'Eritrea?", *Nuova Antologia di scienze, lettere ed arti*, n. 155 (October 1897), pp. 615-616.

²¹¹ Guazzini, *Le ragioni di un confine*, p. 15.

²¹² Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 751-752. During his investigation Martini discovered 60,000 unused shoes, salt for 9 years, wine for 3 years, coffee for 52 months, sugar for 22 months, rum for 2.5 years but "not one kilometre of railway". When he discovered that thousands of lire were spent on futile inspections of fortifications he erupted. The "thugs and idiots" of the military with wastefulness and excesses of all kind had driven the colony to the brink of disintegration. See Ferdinando Martini, *Diario Eritreo*, vol. 1, (Florence, 1941), p. 30.

²¹³ The colony's commercial traffic was relatively elevated in 1888-1889, due to the military operations and can be summarized in the following figures: At Massaua in 1887 the imported goods' value was 8,457,355 lire, in 1888 11,316,936 and in 1899 11,913,874 lire. The majority of these imports came from Asia (52.1%) and Africa (almost 30%). The overall value of the commercial transactions of Massaua's port in the 1890s was stable at around 9 million lire. For example it was 9,017,417 lire in 1893 and 9,606,966 in 1894. Its main exports and apparently the most promising Eritrean cultivations were that of tobacco, coffee, corn, wool and pearls. For the detailed list of Eritrea's commercial provisions see Italia: Governo dell'Eritrea, *Codice di commercio per la Colonia Eritrea*, (Roma, 1909), pp. 140-153.

use for the homeland"; Eritrea had immediate need of skilled labour, of educated people and of capital injections to become profitable.²¹⁴

The inherent deficiencies of the Italian economy, which was not unified or potent internally, was lacking both private and public funds and entrepreneurship and was suffering from the foreign antagonism, were projected upon the economic direction of the colony from its inception to Martini's assumption of power. To make matters worse for Eritrea, the various governments never undertook seriously the establishment of a regular maritime connection between the colony and the Italian ports.²¹⁵ As a result foreign companies (Österreichischer Lloyd) established the line in question, an event that hit hard any potential Italian trade undertaking. In 1883 an Italian company with a capital of 600,000 lire interested in exploiting the Assab salt pits was obliged to renounce its activities because of the absence of sufficient maritime connection. The absence of credit institutions in Eritrea, meant that those willing to invest and operate there had to turn to the British bank in Aden. In addition the coinage problem, the endless military operations and the political insecurity exacerbated the already grim situation. In 1894 Baratieri's effort to upgrade the Italo-Eritrean textiles' trade through the erection of protective tariffs for the foreign products resulted in "boosting" the Italian exports to the colony by just 0.18 %..²¹⁶ On the contrary Martini's initiatives gave an encouraging rise to Eritrea's financial activities. In spring of 1900, after having invited a British expert to examine the mining possibilities of the colony's subsoil the "Eritrean Association for the gold mines" was set up, sponsored by two separate investment groups and the Italian Commercial Bank. The same bank subsidized the "Italian Pearl Association" a company hoping to manage the monopoly of the colony's pearl cultivation. Both initiatives failed miserably. Martini was further disillusioned and disappointed when the "Italian Association of the Eritrean salt pits" was disbanded in 1905 after a short period of operation when the research for guano deposits led to nothing. Despite the fact that Eritrea noted some relative economic progress after 1898 the agricultural society "Association for the Cultivation of Cotton in the colony Eritrea", formed in 1904 by Milanese industrialists, that had been conducting agricultural experiments in the Agordat region, was forced to abandon the undertaking. After four years of promising results the personnel's technical errors and the oppressive tropical conditions halted the operation. The unsuccessful undertakings expanded in Ethiopia as well. The Italo-Belgian "Joint-Stock Company of the Uollega mines" with an initial

²¹⁴ When the new governor received a briefing from the military-legal lawyer on the tax matters of the colony, Martini discovered that not only common sense was absent from the staff but also the knowledge of the Italian language: "These are the magistrates that the government sends to civilize Africa!" See Zaghi, *L'Africa nella coscienza europea*, p. 311.

²¹⁵ The contract of the 22nd April 1893 for the connection of Genoa with the Red Sea ports by the company Navigazione Generale Italiana was finally deemed as non-profitable. Martini was still urging the government in 1905 to extend the colony's railway, improve the road network, construct moles and docking facilities and establish maritime services. Until then these were provided by British, Austrian and German firms. See Ludovica De Courten, *La marina mercantile italiana nella politica di espansione (1860-1914)*, *Industria, Finanza e Trasporti Maritimi*, (Rome, 1989), pp. 212-215.

²¹⁶ Podesta, "Gli investimenti italiani", pp. 160, 163-165.

capital of 1 million francs in spite of the Foreign Ministry's and the Credito Italiano bank's backing, failed to meet its shareholders expectations. The same fate was suffered by "The Past Mareb Syndicate", which was founded in 1903 to exploit the Ethiopian mines of Tigre, and to enhance the Italian influence on the province that was adjacent to Eritrea.²¹⁷

Before the disaster of 1896 Martini was opposed to the expansionist policy,²¹⁸ as he considered that colonies were a luxury for a poor country such as Italy. He disregarded the colony as a demographic outlet and its economic value and questioned the motives of the government.²¹⁹ After Adwa he ruled out any eventuality of conflicts and expansion by trying to "save what could be saved", laying the foundations of a virtuous administration, which in Eritrea had never taken place, and by retaining the territories that were acknowledged to the colony by the treaty of Addis Abeba.²²⁰ The "prudent" policy under new administrative bodies found the parliament in agreement (242 for, 94 against). Upon Martini's assumption of duties it decided to help rebuild the colony with 140 million lire (214-57).²²¹ With the new charter the governor reduced military spending to a minimum and tried to revive the colony by gaining the trust of the indigenous and the foreign. Furthermore, he denounced any aggressive move towards the hinterland and worked zealously on maintaining friendly relations with the surrounding tribes. He embarked on the gradual demobilization and the rational "normal" administration of the colony. The 11 February 1900 ordinance finally subjected the military function to the civil one. The governor remained subordinate to the Minister of Foreign Affairs but he also came to be the definite supervisor of the colony's navy and army commanders. After reorganizing the colony, rationalizing the operational services and abolishing many inessential offices Governor Martini proposed to Rome a reassessment of Eritrea in consonance with among other the following proposals: the supreme authority should lie with the governor, a 10 member advisory board, the Colonial Council should be founded as well as an accounting office, the capital should be transferred to Asmara, the colonial territory should be partitioned into 7 commissariats and 4 residencies (regions to be handled by Italian supervisors-residents) and the civil servants should be appointed with more demanding criteria.²²²

²¹⁷Ibid., pp. 176-184

²¹⁸ "Forget civility and say things without hypocrisy. Say that all the states of Europe are exercising a colonial policy and that is why we too want to do so also. Because in Italy, a state which is new, the people is old and it imposes each one's impatience, rushing and vexation." See Aquarone, "la politica coloniale italiana dopo Adua", p.354.

²¹⁹Ferdinando Martini, "L'Italia e l'Eritrea", in *L'eritrea Economica: prima serie di conferenze tenute in Firenze sotto gli auspici della società di studi geografici e coloniali*, (Rome, 1913), pp. 2-3, 16.

²²⁰Zaghi, *L'Africa nella coscienza europea*, p. 308.

²²¹Aquarone, "la politica coloniale italiana dopo Adua", pp. 356-357.

²²²The colonial draft of May 1903 was implemented along these lines. See Columbano, "Il personale civile", p. 241.

In this process not only the Courts but every obsolete by then, militarily oriented function and service had to desist. On 10 May 1898 he dissolved the military courts of Keren and Asmara and twenty days later he abolished the wasteful military commands. On 29 June 1898 he divided the colonial territory into four administrative regions: Asmara, where he moved the capital in 1897 for geographical and climatic reasons, Assab, Keren and Massaua. They were to be administrated juridically, politically and executively by the regional commissaries. They had the responsibility of directly levying the taxes, issuing notarial certificates, regulating educational activities, managing the colony's land property and moderating the hygienic services, in cooperation with the newborn Sanitary Council and the Provincial Sanitary Direction (30 May 1903 "regulation for regional commissaries and for the residencies"). Moreover they had to oversee, study and collect information on the populace under their supervision.²²³ Martini furthermore introduced the concept of the regional magistrates, who exercised their tasks in collaboration with the nobility and the local chiefs. On 24 November 1898 he commented on the subject: "I am sure that the concept of entrusting the regional courts' presidency to professional magistrates will meet the approval of your Excellency (Foreign Minister Canevaro) who should not forget that ten years of occupation in the plateau have gone by fruitlessly in relation to the study of habits, customs and laws of the various peoples that live there, habits, customs and laws that should have provided precious elements for the creation of the basis of a local legislation...."²²⁴ The replacement of the military staff by a more competent colonial bureaucracy, the abolishment of redundant commissions and the establishment of civil courts in Asmara and Keren on April 1899 led to the institution of a bipolar juridical regime: one for the Italian and the assimilated citizens and one for the natives on 9 February 1902.²²⁵ Public works like the extension of the railway line were entrusted to an engineering association located in Asmara, relieving the army's engineering corps.²²⁶ The civil governor absolutely convinced about the work's utility he pressed and secured king Umberto's support with respect to the projected connection of Massaua with the Ethiopian plateau.²²⁷ Hence, 10 years after his appointment Martini managed to demilitarize Eritrea and bring peace to the region.²²⁸ Martini was officially the first Italian commissioner who met with the Ethiopian emperor after Adwa in 1905, and it was during his time and more specifically on 24 June 1897 that Nerazzini signed a commercial treaty with Menelik.²²⁹ Admirably enough, when in 1898-1899 the province of Tigre was under a revolutionary upheaval against the Ethiopian central government the Italians refrained from any kind of

²²³ Ministero delle Colonie, *Relazione sulla colonia Eritrea del R. Commissario Civile, Deputato Ferdinando Martini per gli esercizi 1902-1907*, presentata dal Ministro delle Colonie (Bertolini) nella seduta del 14 Giugno 1913, vol. 1, (Rome, 1913), pp. 51-52.

²²⁴ Mellana, *L'Italia in Africa*, p. 105.

²²⁵ Marinucci, "L'Amministrazione centrale coloniale", pp. 20-21.

²²⁶ However, the road construction works in 1907 were still carried out by colonial troops. See Ministero delle Colonie, *Relazione sulla colonia Eritrea*, p. 120.

²²⁷ Guazzini, *Le ragioni di un confine*, p. 17.

²²⁸ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 753-759.

²²⁹ Zaghi, *L'Africa nella coscienza europea*, p. 321.

underhand involvement.²³⁰ The policy of maintaining friendly relations with Menelik seemed to pay off on 10 July 1900 when the emperor satisfied the Italian pretensions by setting the border on the Mareb-Belesa-Muna²³¹ line and when he ceded the Cumana region to Eritrea in May 1902.²³² As a result of the Italo-Ethiopian trade agreement signed in 1906, Italy gained the right to install trade posts in Adwa, Gondar and Borumieda and to erect a telegraphic line between Eritrea and Scioa. However, the Djibouti railway and the economic penetration that it had afforded subsequently to the French and the local chieftains' distrust limited the contested Italian initiatives.²³³ Martini also signed the treaty of delimitation of the Eritrean-Sudanese frontier with the governor of the Anglo-Egyptian Suakin, Parsons on 7 December 1898; a treaty that after the elimination of the Mahdist peril ensured the pacification of Eritrea's northern border.²³⁴

Inspired by the British penal code applied in Sudan, Martini put forward in 1903 a legal code more in line with local customs and tradition and less bureaucratic and inflexible as the previous ones. The sentences were taking in consideration the perpetrator's age, religion, tribe and family status and were classified into death sentence, flogging, fine and imprisonment; excluding the latter, they all were practicable and endorsed by the Koran and the Ethiopian customary law. As for the civil affairs, the metropolitan code was uniformly applied under some revisions and suggestions from Eritrea's religious and secular local leaders. Martini's objective was to abbreviate the juridical procedures and render the proceedings simpler and more efficient through the close collaboration of the relevant offices.²³⁵ Public security and the crackdown of the looting raids in the colony's interior was entrusted to the Carabinieri police corps. The Assaorta region for instance, was pacified after the arrests of criminals and rebels that had been engaging in anti-Italian guerilla warfare in the mountains since 1896. Prior to this development the area was passable only with an armed escort. Many of the perpetrators were pardoned and allowed to return to their respective villages.²³⁶ The implementation of the justice system was applied in every corner of the colony and improved. The Carabinieri corps operated in places inhabited by Europeans. Wherever that was not the case the regional commissaries ensured the impartial application of the law.²³⁷ In regard to religious matters the

²³⁰ Martini, *Diario Eritreo*, p. 460.

²³¹ This boundary was coveted for a long time, ever since the parliamentary commission of 1891 deemed it "the boundary that makes us stronger, that guarantees our peace and tranquility". It would also be the main reason for the 1998-2000 war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. See Federica Guazzini, "Storie di confine: percezioni identitarie della frontiera coloniale tra Etiopia e Eritrea (1897-1908), in *Quaderni Storici, La colonia: Italiani in Eritrea*, 1/2002, p. 232.

²³² Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 754, 762.

²³³ Podesta, "Gli investimenti italiani", p. 182.

²³⁴ Salis, *Storia e politica coloniale Italiana*, p. 87.

²³⁵ Ministero delle Colonie, *Relazione sulla colonia Eritrea*, pp. 61-64.

²³⁶ Governo dell'Eritrea, *Leggi penali*, (Asmara, 1911), pp. 3-5.

²³⁷ Martini, *Diario Eritreo*, p. 545.

Italian authorities, respecting the local Muslim and Christian beliefs,²³⁸ negotiated with the Patriarch of Alexandria, the chair of the Christian-Coptic creed, the nomination of an archbishop for the colony. As a result in 1904 a new archbishop moved in creating nevertheless a doctrinal and practical confusion of competences and hierarchy with the Catholic authorities.²³⁹

During Martini's administration the colony became self-sufficient, sustaining every kind of public function and infrastructural construction upon its own means; the state though had to assist the colony in terms of military spending, which although limited, did not cease to exist. According to official records the state's contribution was steadily diminishing: from almost 43 million lire in 1896-1897 and 15 in 1897-1898, the balance sheet gradually descended to an average of approximately 8 million during the 1898-1903 period. From 1903 until 1907 Eritrea's financial liability to the state came to amount to no more than 6.5 million lire.²⁴⁰ In 1897 cotton yarns were imported from the United States, India and England. In contrast in 1906 from the 3.4 million worth of imported cotton, 2.7 came from Italian industries. Since 1900 the colony was unable to provide agricultural products for exportation and it was roughly then when the internal production managed to satisfy the colony's consumption. Indeed, from the sixteen Italian agricultural families that had settled in Eritrea after Franchetti's attempts fifteen had repatriated.²⁴¹ Martini finally halted the boundless appropriation of the natives' land that was a constant source of discontent and resistance during the period 1893-1895. Granting plots of lands to Rome's African subjects in a rational way finally guaranteed Eritrea's internal pacification.²⁴² In addition Martini, acknowledging that the colony's blunders partially originated by the low level of the incoming settlers set some limitations to Italian immigration with his February 22 1898 decree. The aspiring colonizers disillusioned by Eritrea's conditions often lost their interest in agriculture and abandoned their estates and equipment granted to them by the colonial authorities. According to the governor's law the newcomers had to be equipped with enough money (250 lire) to make the return trip in case they decided to repatriate. They also had to exhibit a certificate, provided by their town halls in Italy, which attested that they had the necessary means

²³⁸ Martini scolded Carbonara when the latter lamented the former's approval for the construction of a mosque in Cheren in 1899. See *Ibid.*, p. 541.

²³⁹ Ministero delle Colonie, *Relazione sulla colonia Eritrea*, pp. 20-22, 30.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 42. Indicatively the overall state expenses in Africa during the previous years were: 34 million lire in 1868, 44 in 1881, 49 in 1882, 95 in 1886, 114 in 1887, 157 in 1888. See Alessandro Schiavi, *Dall'Eritrea alla Libia; gli insegnamenti di trent'anni di colonizzazione italo-africana sul Mar Rosso*, (Milan, 1912), p. 10. Other scholars, set these figures noticeably higher: 80-90 million since 1881, 116 in 1883-1883, 121 in 1883-1884, 132 in 1884-1885, 131 in 1885-1886, 126 in 1886-1887, 175 in 1887-1888 and 289 in 1888-1889. See Rainero, *L'anticolonialismo*, p. 206.

²⁴¹ Martini not only did not commit himself keenly to the immigration-agricultural issue, but his administration seemed to dispel the longstanding myth of Eritrea as an immigration outlet. See Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 755.

²⁴² Aquarone, "La ricerca di una politica coloniale", p. 301.

to settle in Eritrea. On September 8 1898 Martini decided to expel 10 Italian laborers whose presence was deemed detrimental for the colony.²⁴³

On 22 June 1898 Martini visited an experimental estate of 90 hectares in Adi Ugri only to discover that the farms were deserted and the crops (coffee and olives) were far from fruitful. To boost local production, in concert with the customs' director, he proposed the imposition of high tariffs to the agricultural products that were imported in the colony, such as barley. He raised the duties for foreign flour and alcoholic products but facilitated, by lowering the ad valorem tax, the importation of Italian products, except of the agricultural ones.²⁴⁴ To avoid the antagonism from colonial-metropolitan products and to boost exports,²⁴⁵ Martini did not impose protectionist tariffs nor permitted a generic laissez faire; instead he examined the potential and profitability of every product on a case by case basis. The ominous situation was reversed the following years to the extent that Eritrean wheat was imported to Italy under the regulating law of 18 July 1904.²⁴⁶

A scientific investigation of the colony's soil and its capabilities that took place in 1901, revealed that the cultivation of tobacco, a much appreciated commodity in Europe, was feasible. In regard to the mining policies, Martini also regulated the exploitation of the colony's subsoil in May 1903, in line with the British methods. He classified it in three categories: soil that was to be exploited under investigative permits lasting one year, soil for which there would be research permits lasting two and potentially three years and lastly soil for which mineral concessions would be granted with a duration of fifty to eighty years.²⁴⁷ During Martini's final years as governor (1903-7) the navigation and commercial traffic in Massaua constantly rising and benefiting the Italian agricultural and industrial sectors. Eritrea was importing Italian wine, olive oil and manufactured products whereas it exported cotton, tobacco, leathers and rubber among other products. The imports were regulated by the September 1903 and the September 1904 royal decrees.²⁴⁸ Confronting the colony's perpetual problem, the orderly and mutually profitable management of the estates, Martini made clear that Eritrea's land was property of the royal Italian authorities. However, these were regulated in accordance with local traditions and sense of justice. In 1907 he proposed the distribution of Eritrea's cultivable land: 3,420

²⁴³ Ibid., p. 302.

²⁴⁴ Martini, *Diario Eritreo*, p. 201.

²⁴⁵ Deputy Parenzo, even before the capture of Massaua, had warned the government that the products of an agricultural colony would undoubtedly antagonize the Italian ones. See Arbib, "La questione d'Africa alla Camera Italiana", p. 220.

²⁴⁶ Penne, *Per l'Italia africana*, p. 43.

²⁴⁷ Luigi Baldacci, "Del problema minerario nelle nostre colonie (Eritrea)", Istituto coloniale italiano, Atti del secondo congresso degli italiani all'estero, relazioni e comunicazioni, vol. 1 part 2, Conference, (Rome, 11-20 June 1911), pp. 1369-1370.

²⁴⁸ Martini, *Diario Eritreo*, pp. 189-234.

hectares in the plateau to be granted to Ethiopian cultivators, 5,339 in the lowlands to the Muslim tribes, 8,400 to industrial associations, 2,500 to Italian immigrants.²⁴⁹

Coming in, Martini found a colony morally and materially abandoned, poor, destroyed after 10 years of military administration and conflicts, threatened by the Mahdists and the Ethiopians, undermined by the European intrigues, tormented by the uncertainty and the unreasonable economic practices, "without resources, energy, life". When he departed, in 1907, Eritrea was territorially secure and financially stable. The balance sheet, excluding the military expenses which were regulated by Rome, was for the first time positive²⁵⁰ and the administration, based on local principles and justice, exuded respect and trust.²⁵¹ The inhabitants of the colony were peacefully cohabiting alongside the Italian officials and workers²⁵² while the rivalry between civil and military authority, so harmful for Africans and Italians, had been eradicated. The disgrace of Adwa began to fade and the Italian prestige increased due to the complete administrative, economic and legislative reorganization of Eritrea. Furthermore, business activities were encouraged²⁵³ and infrastructure, such as railways and public works, grew. Finally, it can be ascertained that the governor had performed a small miracle by maximizing the exploitation of the colony's commercial, agricultural and industrial possibilities.²⁵⁴ This miracle was perhaps the proof that the colony, under serious and prudent management, could be profitable.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 164-165.

²⁵⁰ The average amount of the colony's fiscal revenue (manufacture, municipal and commerce taxes) in the period 1902-1907 was approximately 100,000 lire. See Ibid., p.161.

²⁵¹ Martini, *Nell'Africa italiana*, p. 82.

²⁵² The European and Italian workers and craftsmen that desired to try their luck in Eritrea had to have 250 lire according the 1902 law and 100 according to the reviewed law of 1904 cover their first expenses. They had to repatriate in case they were unable to find employment in any occupation after three months of residence. See Ibid., pp. 139-140.

²⁵³ During Martini's administration the colony expanded commercially and even engaged in trading activities with the Yemen coast across the Red Sea. See Luigi Villari, "The Italian Red Sea Colonies", *Journal of The Royal Central Asian Society*, 14/2 (1927) p. 122.

²⁵⁴ Zaghi, *L'Africa nella coscienza europea*, pp. 318-320.

6. The establishment of the Italian colony in Somalia

Somalia extends from Djibouti in the north to Kenya in the south. It is also called Horn of Africa, as it is washed by the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea.¹ This strategic location had attracted from the 15th century the interest of the Portuguese explorers but ultimately it came under Ottoman suzerainty in 1586. During the 16th and 17th century the Portuguese were established on the Somalian shores on the Indian Ocean, a fact which distressed the Sultanate of Muscat, in today's Oman. The Arabs in 1698 set the objective of expelling the Europeans from the African coast and until 1729 the Portuguese influence was limited to the port of Mombasa. In 1872 the Sultan of Zanzibar, realizing the power vacuum in the region, expanded his influence in the territories around Kismayo. Three years later, as part of Khedive Ismail's imperialist policy, the Egyptians occupied for three months the location but the British reaction returned the southern coast of Somalia under the sovereignty of the Sultan of Zanzibar. Thus, he in 1880 had the nominal control of Lamu, Mogadishu, Mombasa, Kismayo and Barawa.²

The Italian involvement in southern Somalia dates from the second half of 1884. It was then when Mancini authorized the specialist explorer Antonio Cecchi to go to the region for a "confidential mission of intelligence and research" and if there were no obstacles to proceed to the "occupation or at least to the consolidation of an Italian protectorate."³ The Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs promoted the idea of a treaty with Zanzibar aiming at the concession of some coastline location to Italy.⁴ In 1885, as a result of the European antagonism in the context of Africa's partition, Cecchi faced a complicated and potentially dangerous situation. Germany and Britain in 1884-1885 were clashing diplomatically for establishing their influence on Sayyid Barghash bin Said Al-Busaid (1837-1888), Sultan of Zanzibar and typically suzerain of Somalia's coast. The Germans, through the German East Africa Company (Deutsch Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft), having consolidated their position in Tanganyika, were seeking to expand further north at a time when the British set as their priority in the

¹ The unusual morphology of the Somalian coasts may hinder the attempt to study the facts that took place there. It should be clarified that in this study the southern coast of Somalia on the Indian Ocean shall be examined, that which attracted the Italian interest. The Red Sea shores constituted the French (colony of Djibouti) and the British Somalia.

² Sindacato italiano arti grafiche, a cura del Ministero delle Colonie, *Oltre Giuba. Notizie raccolte a cura del Commissariato Generale nel primo anno di occupazione italiana (1925-1926)*, (Rome, 1927), pp. 152-154.

³ Mancini was supporting exploratory missions "in the direction of another region of Africa, to areas unoccupied and fertile which, in accordance with the raw information that we shall receive, could be made a fertile ground for activities, including agricultural, of the Italians." Thus, Cecchi was sent to ascertain the political conditions at the coastline of Somalia and the possibility of utilizing the rivers there as trade routes to the mainland. See Tommaso Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale e Francesco Crispi*, (Milan, 1928), p. 192

⁴ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XVI-XVII, (Rome, 1994), pp. 846-847.

area the imposition of an protectorate on Zanzibar. Rome, which had yet to appoint a consul to the shores of the Indian Ocean, was in no position to collide with these superpowers.⁵ At that time Italy, although it did not have financial interests on the Indian Ocean shores, wanted to assume the role of a colonial power in the region, equivalent to that of Britain and of Germany.

Cecchi's mission to the Sultan's court ended with the signing of an agreement of "friendship and commerce" on 28 May 1885. This guaranteed the favorable treatment of the Italian citizens in the Sultan's dominions and the equal treatment of his subjects to the territories under Italian control. The exchange of consuls, the ability of the Italians to acquire property in Zanzibar and the most favoured nation clause for Italy were additionally granted.⁶ Even though Sayyid Barghash seemed willing to proceed to territorial concessions to Italy, the matter did not have a positive outcome for Rome. His inability to act independently due to the Anglo-German pressure and the ambiguity as to which territories actually belonged to him and which did not, were the suspending factors. A few days later he withdrew his offer. The new Foreign Minister, di Robilant advised Cecchi to refrain from any action "that could appear hostile" and to "do nothing which could displease the Germans". The negotiations and the talks about the renewal of the Triple Alliance in 1887 were in progress and di Robilant wanted to avoid disputes with the ally country at all costs. Cecchi departing from Zanzibar headed with the ship "Barbarigo" at a location called Juba (Giuba), where he discovered "rich commercial resources". At the time of his empty-handed return to Italy, Britain and Germany, putting their differences aside, signed a treaty of co-operation for Eastern Africa. With the treaty of October 1886 the ownership of Tanganyika was being officially acknowledged to Germany whereas the British were occupying Uganda and Kenya.⁷

In 1885 very few Italians were residing in Zanzibar and in its continental dominions. The trade between Italy and the African horn was in the hands of a single man, the businessman Vincenzo Filonardi (1853-1916). With the assistance of the Bank of Rome he founded the company "V. Filonardi & Compagnia" with an initial capital of 180,000 lire. His commercial activities were profitable and due to the

⁵ Angelo Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa Orientale Dall'Unità alla Marcia su Roma*, (Rome-Bari, 1976), pp. 234-235. The Germans, initially, did not wish to see yet another antagonistic power acquire bases in Somalia. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXII, (Rome, 1994), p. 142. Afterwards, having ensured for themselves Tanganyika, they seemed more conciliatory towards the Italian requests. See *Ibid.*, p. 232.

⁶ Gustavo Chiesi, *La colonizzazione Europea nell'Est Africa, Italia-Inghilterra-Germania*, (Turin, 1909), p. 88.

⁷ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 236-237. On August 1885 German warships threatened to shell Zanzibar if the Sultan did not recognize the German acquisitions in the hinterland. In October of the same year Berlin and London agreed to recognize the Sultan's sovereignty over just a few locations of Somalia. On 4 December the Sultan accepted the Anglo-German demarcation of his dominions and the occupation of Kenya and Tanganyika. See Robert L. Hess, *Italian colonialism in Somalia*, (Chicago, 1966), p. 17.

influence that he was enjoying in Eastern Africa he was appointed consul of Italy in Zanzibar, at the suggestion of Cecchi.⁸

Filonardi, realizing from close proximity the fear and the hatred that the Sultan fostered for the Germans, believed that "not only would the latter be satisfied if Italy occupied the area of Somalia but that he would wholeheartedly support it". Indeed, Sayyid Barghash, to compensate for the Anglo-German presence in southern Somalia, offered Kismayo to Italy. The offer was similar to the one he had made to Cecchi 18 months before. The Sultan was aspiring to turn one Power against the other, but he was dissatisfied when the Italian representative assured him that Rome was not willing to act dynamically in the context of its colonial policy. So, he withdrew his proposal and another opportunity was missed. On 15 May 1888 Filonardi, now arbiter and exponent of the Italian colonial policy in the Indian Ocean requested a hearing from the new Sultan I bin Said Al-Busaid (1852-1890). His request was not granted because of the festive season of Ramadan, during which every official activity is traditionally suspended. The consul perceived this as an insult to the person of the King of Italy and demanded from the Sultan the concession of Kismayo⁹ to satisfy the Italian government.¹⁰ Sayyid Khalifa did not give into the pressure although Filonardi broke off diplomatic relations between Zanzibar and Italy.¹¹

In the next year, after lengthy negotiations between Crispi and Salisbury, the golden mean was found.¹² The Anglo-Italian agreement of 3 August 1889 resulted in Rome acquiring Somalia's ports, with the Sultan's acquiescence. The coastal location is called Benadir (country of trade) and it includes the ports of Merca, Brava, Mogadishu and Uarscheik.¹³ The Italians were consolidated in this area in the late

⁸ Ibid., pp. 16-18. Filonardi laboured not only for the benefit of his homeland but also for his own gain. If Italy was eventually consolidated on the coast of Somalia, he would draw and secure significant financial benefits. Wishing to expand his commercial activities in Eastern Africa and to safeguard the financial interests of his company there, he tried to keep Rome's interest for the region at a high level.

⁹ In the Italian planning, this particular port would constitute a replenishment station and a coal depot for the Italian naval and merchant fleet. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXVII, (Rome, 2000), pp. 405-406.

¹⁰ The only way the Italian side could be satisfied, according to the Italian consul, was a formal written apology of the Sultan to the king of Italy accompanied by territorial concessions. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXII, (Rome, 1994), p. 39. The Sultan sent the letter, but refused to give up part of his territories. See Ibid., p. 43.

¹¹ Hess, *colonialism in Somalia*, p. 19.

¹² Salisbury, repeatedly assured the Italian diplomats that Britain had no objection to a possible Italian penetration in Somalia. Moreover in 1889, he stated: "Italy would be welcome in Somalia. Britain is happy to have Italy as neighbour, I am not saying in relation to the indigenous tribes that trade slaves, but preferable to other nations." See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXII (Rome, 1994), pp. 260-267. Furthermore, he had personally promised that he would do everything possible so that Rome would acquire Kismayo. See Ibid., pp. 124-125.

¹³ In their effort to make their presence in Somalia more tangible, Italians dispatched a naval mission in Uarscheik, the last Benadir port still unvisited, on April 1890. The result was two dead and several wounded from the landed contingent by the ship Volta. Filonardi, returned and occupied the territory

19th century setting as their goal the penetration of the hinterland.¹⁴ In addition to the usual aspirations, settling immigrants and creating commercial stations, Somalia had for the Italians an additional significance. The new colony had enormous strategic importance since from there Rome was in position to "encircle" and to apply pressure to the long-standing objective, Ethiopia.¹⁵ According to a member of an exploratory mission to Benadir: "It is pointless to think that we can civilize this people, the issue is to get them to behave and this is done only by shooting or with the cane, on a case by case basis." In Somalia i.e., the Italians would not implement their selfless beneficial work but they would use the country as a "bridge towards Ethiopia".¹⁶

The agreement of 1 July 1890 between Britain and Germany, with which Zanzibar was turned into a British protectorate, accelerated the procedures and facilitated the Italian plans.¹⁷ More specifically, the agreement granted the strategically important island of Heligoland and a sphere of influence in Tanganyika to Berlin for the British protectorate in Zanzibar and Kenya.¹⁸ The Imperial British East Africa Company, beneficiary now of Benadir, transferred it directly to Italy under a sui generis subletting regime. Crispi's policy after the signing of the protocol with London, in March 1891, for the demarcation of the individual dominions, appeared to triumph.¹⁹ The always co-operative British recognized the protectorate over Ethiopia, in accordance with the Italian version of the treaty of Ucciali, the occupation of Benadir and the joint possession of Kismayo. Crispi's replacement, di Rudini, although anti-Africanist, did not break off talks with the British about Somalia. In March and April 1891 he concluded agreements with the diplomat Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 1st Marquis of Dufferin (1826-1902) for the demarcation of the spheres of influence in Eastern Africa.²⁰

The diplomatic frenzy had not ended. After the Sultan was informed of the fate of his territories, the Italian commissioner Cottoni concluded with Portal, the British representative of Zanzibar's government, another act of transfer, that of

between Uarcheik and Obbia, acquiring on 14 March 1890 by treaty with the local chieftains the strategically positioned city Atlaleh. Before his departure, he raised the Italian flag, renamed the city to Itala and appointed an ascari garrison to maintain public order in the name of the Italian king. Chiesi, *La colonizzazione Europea*, p. 93

¹⁴ Fabio Grassi, *Le origini dell'imperialismo italiano: Il "caso somalo" (1896-1915)*, (Lecce, 1980), p. 38.

¹⁵ Nicola Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione coloniale italiana*, (Bologna, 2002), p. 85.

¹⁶ Alessandro Aruffo, *Storia del colonialismo italiano da Crispi a Mussolini*, (Rome, 2003), pp. 42-45.

¹⁷ For the further study of the articles of the Anglo-German treaty of 1890 see H. Romain Rainero, *Il colonialismo, Il nuovo mondo industriale, gli stati nazionali e l'espansionismo coloniale*, (Florence, 1978), pp. 43-44. For the whole spectrum of the East African German-British negotiations see Jonas Fosli Gjersø, "The Scramble for East Africa: British Motives Reconsidered, 1884-95", *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 43/5 (2015), pp. 831-860.

¹⁸ William L. Langer, *La diplomazia dell'imperialismo (1890-1902)*, v. 1 (New York, 1935), pp.18-19.

¹⁹ Carlo Rossetti, *Manuale di legislazione della Somalia Italiana, documenti diplomatici e inediti*, vol. 1, (Rome, 1914), p. 11.

²⁰ Hess, *colonialism in Somalia*, pp. 28-32.

Benadir to Italy in August 1891. The government of Giolitti, in power since May 1892, being indifferent about Somalia, suggested the transfer of Benadir to Filonardi's company. It also dispatched two agents (Lovatelli, Incoronato) to Africa to gather information about the situation there. The results of the investigation were ambiguous. According to the reports Somalia was fertile but not suitable for an immigration colony. Its tropical climate permitted the Europeans to work as "supervisors and not as workers". Finally, whereas the cultivation of cotton could form a source of income for the colony, the inadequacy of its ports made maritime trade precarious.²¹ As happened previously in Assab, many questioned the real commercial value of the region ports' that in 1895 registered only 306,442 Maria Teresa coins worth of transit value.²²

The government did not wish to become involved militarily and financially in Somalia too. So, it turned to the British model, of the indirect imperialism, according to which a company assumed control of the wealth-producing resources of the colony, with the obligation to administer it fiscally and politically.²³ The success of the venture was being guaranteed by the legitimate expectation of profit and after that by the investment of funds. The Italian government, planning in 1889 the creation of a "Società Italiana per l'Africa Orientale" but being financially unable to sustain it, transferred to Filonardi's company the administration of Benadir for three years with the prospect of renewal for another fifty.²⁴ The company, reminiscent of Rubattino's role in Assab, was receiving annually a state subsidy to the tune of 300,000 lire and was required to assume the administration, pay the wages of the "public" servants and see to the infrastructure and the defence of the colony. In addition, it had to pay to the Sultan of Zanzibar an installment worth 160,000 rupees every year as a kind of rent. After the end of the proceedings, the *Il Matino*, newspaper of Naples, in exultation wrote that "Italy managed to fulfill its duty and its interests in those areas as a civilized power with insignificant costs."²⁵

Foreign Minister Felice Napoleone Canevaro (1838-1926) disappointed by the developments in Eritrea, stated to the parliament on 28 March 1899: "The

²¹ Ibid., p. 48.

²² Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 432.

²³ The Italian government chose the indirect system of governance "considering it to be not only the most economical but also the least jeopardizing from international perspective and the most suitable for a peaceful penetration." See Grassi, *Il caso somalo*, p. 107. The companies covered the government's involvement in Africa, at least in the eyes of the parliament and of the public opinion and maintained its obligations to a minimum. The British diplomats were the first to mention the establishment of an Italian East Africa Company, with initial capital of 20 million francs, which would control the protectorate over Ethiopia and the territories of Benadir managing all their wealth-producing resources. See reference of the newspaper *Sunday Night*, ASMAE, ASMAI, position 55/4, folder 22, Rome without date.

²⁴ Cesare Cesari, *Colonie e possedimenti coloniali, cenni storici-geografici ed economici*, (Rome, 1927), pp. 113-114.

²⁵ Francesco Surdich, "Il colonialismo italiano, l'imperialismo straccione," in *Il Calendario*, (September 1996), pp. 17-18.

(colonial) administration through a company is the best guarantee against the inclination towards military enterprises."²⁶ However, according to the subsequent governor of Somalia, Giacomo De Martino (1868-1956) the Italians at Benadir, between military domination and gradual penetration by peaceful means, chose the former.²⁷ They resorted to the easy solution of using their weapons for law enforcement, for safeguarding the trade, for the administration of justice. It was, indeed the easy solution, given the coexistence of different tribes and the apparent lack of a single national conscience in Somalia in this period. The absence of coordinated resistance made Rome's conquering task infinitely more feasible compared to the situation encountered by the Italian imperialists in Ethiopia. Thus, already by 1899 (officially on 7 April 1899), Filonardi had imposed the Italian protectorate on Obbia²⁸ and Majerteen.²⁹ The protectorate over the Mogadishu city and surroundings was proclaimed in March 24 1891.³⁰ In this manner he extended the borders of the second Italian colony (secondogenita), whose administration he was given for exactly 3 years, from 16 July 1893 to 15 July 1896.

The first act of the Filonardi administration was indicative of what was to come. On 10 October 1893 an Italian officer was murdered in Mekra by a native. The culprit was arrested, mutilated and the town, where the unfortunate incident occurred was bombarded by Italian warships.³¹ Despite the knowledge of the country and its conditions and in spite of the vigour and the capabilities of the governor, the company was a financial failure. The costs of the colony, especially those regarding Benadir's defence, were hard to bear. Just the rent that the company was paying to the Sultan of Zanzibar was absorbing 60% of its budget. Filonardi appealed to the ministry of Foreign Affairs so that it would renegotiate the amount of the rent, but without result.³² The company failed miserably to meet the financial, military and administrative needs of Somalia. The expert Angelo Del Boca laid the issue on its

²⁶ Alberto Aquarone, *Dopo Adua: politica e amministrazione coloniale*, (Rome, 1989), p. 51.

²⁷ Giacomo De Martino, *La Somalia italiana nei tre anni del mio Governo*, (Rome, 1912), p. 7.

²⁸ Filonardi, travelled to Obbia on the ship Dogali, a fact that highlights the profound impact of the battle to the Italian psyche, on 7 February and signed the protectorate agreement with the Sultan of Obbia the next day. Italian authorities notified the powers in line with the general act of the Berlin Conference on 16 May 1889. Chiesi, *La colonizzazione Europea*, p. 89

²⁹ The sultans of the two regions would receive 1,800 Maria Teresa coins annually in order not to conclude "contracts or agreements with any other government or person without the full consent of the Italian government." Afterwards, Italian troops occupied the area between the two protectorates too. See Francesco Surdich, "Il colonialismo italiano, l'imperialismo straccione," in *Il Calendario*, (September 1996), p. 8. The protectorate over Obbia was criticized as useless and damaging by the president of the Italian Geographical Society incurring the reaction of an Italian Ministerial undersecretary. See ASMAE, ASMAI, position 55/4, folder 22, n. 21401, Rome 8 June 1889. The sultans of Obbia and Majerteen promised in 1896, that they would gather 50,000 men, an army that would fight on the side of the Italians against Menelik, if Rome took care of its equipment. The plan was cancelled by the Ethiopian triumph in Adwa. See Hess, *colonialism in Somalia*, p. 126.

³⁰ Rossetti, *Manuale di legislazione della Somalia Italiana*, p. 13.

³¹ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 568.

³² Grassi, *Il caso somalo*, pp. 48-49.

proper foundation: "If, on one hand, the choice of the government not to take on financial and military obligations in Somalia seems reasonable, on the other hand it shows a large dose of irresponsibility, because the Filonardi Company did not possess the necessary funds or the experience or the organization to govern a colony, which after the ephemeral presence of the Egyptians and the Zanzibari, was in chaos and misery, where a large part of the land remained unexplored and justice was administered by corrupt cadis."³³ Regarding the exercise of the justice in Somalia the Sultan of Zanzibar entitled the Italian authorities in 1901 to administer legally the north part of the country regarding the offenses committed by Italians or other foreigners.³⁴ In the south part of Somalia the Sultan had already implemented some kind of elemental penal code. In Merka, Brava and Mogadishu the Italians were authorized to put in use the consular law (extraterritoriality) for their subjects, the Muslim law for the natives and regarding the other regions Rome had to formulate the correspondent norms.³⁵

In 1896 the rental period was expiring and the government had to decide in what manner it would manage Benadir. The removal and replacement of Filonardi's company was considered to be practical, with the aim of reorganizing and exploiting financially the colony. So, instead of abandoning Somalia, Rome appointed there yet another private company, also a confused mixture of public and private elements.³⁶ The new company had the stamp of Cecchi. He was in Milan, fishing with indefatigable efforts for prospective investors, by advertising Benadir's commercial possibilities. The defeat at Amba Alagi caused temporary hesitation and indifference on the part of the latter, but just three months after the defeat of Adwa and the fall of the Crispi government the company was founded with the title "Società Anonima Commerciale del Benadir" on 25 June 1896.³⁷ Due to the public opinion's opposition to colonial adventures or its indifference after Adua the first law regarding the subsidizing of the colony took three years to be ratified by the parliament in November 29 1899.³⁸

The industrialist Giorgio Mylius (1870-1935), one of the founders of the company and a relative of Cecchi, visited the colony in 1895 to determine the possibility of growing cotton. He was persuaded that Somalia could supply with raw

³³ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 568.

³⁴ Vincenzo Mellana, *L'Italia in Africa. Serie giuridico-amministrativa v. 2, L'amministrazione della giustizia nei territori oltremare tomo I, l'amministrazione della giustizia in Eritrea e in Somalia (1869-1936)*, (Rome, 1971), p. 178.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 182.

³⁶ Hess, *colonialism in Somalia*, p. 178.

³⁷ The new company was supposed to replace immediately the Filonardi Company at Benadir. Because of difficulties and delays it assumed effective administration of the colony on 1 January 1900, a fact that attests to the total anarchy that for four years ruled in Italian Somalia, an indirect result of the 1896 defeat. See Marcello Pivato, *La nostra colonia del Benadir*, (Venice, 1914), pp. 14-15. Typically, the company of Benadir became owner of the territories there in 1899, following a decision by the parliament (173 for 151 against). See Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 777.

³⁸ *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 777.

materials the Italian textile industries and left convinced of the practical benefits of the venture. The merchants and manufacturers of Milan, trusting Mylius' associates, contributed 30,000 lire to the initial capital of the company.³⁹ The Italian government entrusted the company of Benadir with the possession and use of public lands, with the right to regulate customs duties and with the exclusive rights to the mines of Italian Somalia. The company was required to "develop socially and economically" the colony, to settle the issue of justice, as well as the problem of slavery, alcohol and firearms trading, in accordance with the decisions of the Berlin and Brussels conferences.⁴⁰ It also had to maintain in the colony a security force of 600-700 men, pay the rent to the Sultan of Zanzibar and the agreed amounts to the chieftains under protection, maintain the infrastructure and regulate the postal services.⁴¹ The new administration had to undertake a series of public and dock works and set up the maritime connection with Zanzibar, Massaua and Aden.⁴² Of course, in spite of the above obligations, the priority of the company was the consolidation of an administration tailored to the industrial requirements and the cultivation of cotton.

Despite the grandiose designs and the given shortage of funds and of the company's financial capabilities, Cecchi, upon assumption of his duties, had even more ambitious plans. The new governor, now established in Mogadishu, under the supervision of the Italian consul in Zanzibar, was visualizing the creation of a profitable and powerful colony. He insisted on the importance of acquiring the harbour of Kismayo, on maintaining friendly relations with the neighbouring local populations and on the need to occupy Lugh, a key point for controlling the Juba plain. The capture of Kismayo could cause British discomfort, so the conquest of Lugh was considered more feasible. The explorer Vittorio Bottego was put in charge of the mission. En route towards the objective he was killing indiscriminately the indigenous and in fact 25 Somalis are estimated to have been slain during the first day. A lieutenant, member of the mission, mentioned about the raid: "We shoot anyone we see, arresting women and the elderly."⁴³ The "glorious" operation ended with the occupation of the site and the expansion of the Italian influence to the surrounding areas.⁴⁴

³⁹ Aquarone, *Dopo Adua: politica*, p. 63.

⁴⁰ Grassi, *Il caso somalo*, p. 102. Throughout this period Italian, British and French diplomats were meeting together and were concluding agreements about the ban on arms trafficking in Eastern Africa. See Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *D.D.I.*, vol. XXII, (Rome, 1994), p. 295.

⁴¹ Giovanni Bosco Naitza, *Il Colonialismo nella storia d'Italia (1882-1949)*, (Florence, 1975), p. 78.

⁴² Gian Luca Podesta, "Gli investimenti italiani in Africa orientale 1869-1919", *Annali dell'Istituto italo-germanico in Trento*, v. 24, 1998, p. 173.

⁴³ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 571-573.

⁴⁴ In 1895 the Sultan of Lugh, Ali Hassan Nur, asked for Italian protection and promised to facilitate the flow of commercial goods towards the ports of Benadir. Furthermore, he granted to the Italians the right to build a fortress and raise the Italian flag at any point of his territory as well as the use of the mines and of the cultivable expanses. See ASMAI, folder 8, package 84, without protocol number, Lugh 4 December 1895.

Two months after taking office Cecchi was murdered by natives.⁴⁵ Two retaliation expeditions were organized in December 1896 and March 1897 against the villages that deemed culpable for the assassination.⁴⁶ Emilio Dulio (1859-1950) took over as governor with extraordinary powers for the punishment of those responsible. The murder of Cecchi but also of Bottego by indigenous amplified the voices calling for the withdrawal from Somalia and put di Rudini's government in a difficult position, facing now one more African tragedy.⁴⁷ As if that were not enough, at that time the gritty Muslim tribe of the Uadan revolted. They felt that the structure of their ancient economical-social system was being threatened, as they watched the Italians tear apart the traditional institutions of the Somalian tribes in an attempt to harmonize the country with the agricultural requirements of modern Europe. The activities of the Catholic missionaries and the criminalization of slaveholding and of the buying and selling of slaves, practices accepted and self-evident for the Somalis, did not leave margin for negotiations. The hostilities broke out in 1896, opening a second African front for the Italians and continued unabated until 1897. The Italians responded with savagery, not only to squash the defection but also "to avenge Cecchi's murder". The destruction of the Uadan villages and the poisoning of their wells did not particularly trouble the Italian parliament. It was there when on 4 May 1897, Foreign Minister Venosta stated: "The guilty tribes were known: we therefore needed to punish them to avenge our dead, to not recognize rights to the barbarians, to prevent other murders" and what was needed "was a clear civilizing act to Benadir to punish in a manner capable to set an example to those unscrupulous barbarians."⁴⁸ The Uadan were ultimately subdued and their leaders agreed to acknowledge the unobstructed movement of products in their territory and the right of the company to build fortresses in their lands.⁴⁹

In the first years of Benadir's administration by the manufacturers of Milan the results were disappointing. The company of Benadir succeeded only in establishing a sanitary service, inviting an expert to draw up a land evaluation and colonization program and stipulating a convention with the Deutsche Ost-Africa Linie for the monthly connection of Benadir with Aden and Zanzibar.⁵⁰ The Italian Somalia did not evolve into a commercial hub of Eastern Africa, since neither funds were invested there nor public utility works were constructed. The ports remained

⁴⁵ Guido Corni, *Somalia italiana*, vol. 2, (Milan, 1937), p. 14.

⁴⁶ Massimo Gaibi, *Manuale di storia politico-militare delle colonie italiane*, (Rome, 1928), pp. 128-129.

⁴⁷ The military adviser of the colony called for the exemplary punishment of the perpetrators "for the dignity of our flag, for the stature of the Italian name, but also for the safety of our dominion in these shores." See Grassi, *Il caso somalo*, pp. 43-44.

⁴⁸ From these statements is discerned the belief that the "superior" race, in this case the Italian, can and should impose by force its values and morals on the "lower" ones. These proclamations come in contradiction to the previous theories about a civilizing mission and a well-intentioned rule. After the cessation of hostilities the Foreign Minister was overjoyed with the victory since in this manner the remaining populations of Benadir were "sufficiently impressed". See *Ibid.*, pp. 73-76.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-80.

⁵⁰ Podesta, "Gli investimenti italiani", p. 174.

insufficient, the road arteries inadequate, the industrial units non-existent.⁵¹ The tropical climate and the frequent phenomena of violence were forcing the few Italian settlers⁵² to remain in the big coastal cities and not venture to head in the mainland where, in any case, the Italian influence was superficial.⁵³ 90% of the colony's budget was being absorbed by military expenses, at a time when the parliament was indifferent to the future of Somalia.⁵⁴ The accusation by the *Il Secolo* newspaper that spoke of the tolerant attitude of the Italian colonial authorities towards the phenomenon of slavery were added to those about economic malaise, underdevelopment, lawlessness, opportunism, judicial and administrative inadequacy.⁵⁵ The opinion of the experienced explorer Robecchi-Bricchetti is enlightening: "The company which was never subject to any control on behalf of the government, and on the contrary was left by the latter to its own devices, even if it said that it was doing so, did not know how to carry out until now any public or private project, not a house, not a lodging, not a warehouse, not an anchorage, not a shelter just like it did not know how to set up a school, an asylum, a hospital, a pharmacy, or ultimately, any institute, even in an embryonic state, to improve the conditions of that populace". He also concluded that Somalia is unable to absorb sizeable portions of Italian immigrants since it did not possess fertile land or pastures like Lombardy's and the Somalis were bellicose and used to "primitive" means of production.⁵⁶ He, after a survey to the biggest Somali cities in 1903 discovered that the 1/3 of the inhabitants were actual slaves. Until 1905, when the contract between the company of Benadir and the Italian government was expiring, no projects had been completed for the benefit of the population of Somalia. It was missing any trace of a judicial system, any type of security for the commerce and the safety of residents and any modicum of virtuous governance. The colony of Somalia existed only on paper.

Benadir's tragic situation and the scandals about the brutality and the preservation of the slavery institution in Italian lands forced the Giolitti government to act, even with a considerable delay. In 1904 it entered into negotiations with the government of Britain and of Zanzibar, so that it would take over itself the administration of the troubled colony, simultaneously putting an inglorious end to the ambitious experiment of indirect imperialism. On 13 January in London the Italian

⁵¹ Plans for a railway from Brava to Afgoi or Afgooye, a line that would cost 8 million lire, were on paper. The proposed enterprise would contribute to the pacification, the transit trade and the economic development of the region. See Andrea Maggiorotti, "Del problema ferroviario; con speciale riguardo al sistema finanziario più adatto alla costruzione di ferrovie nelle nostre colonie-Somalia Italiana", Istituto coloniale italiano, Atti del secondo congresso degli italiani all'estero, relazioni e comunicazioni, vol. 1 part 2, Conference, (Rome, 11-20 June 1911), pp. 1186-1190.

⁵² From the thousands of Italian immigrants that were swarming to America and Australia only 13 individuals had settled until 1903 in Benadir. See Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 781.

⁵³ Aquarone, *Dopo Adua: politica*, p. 63.

⁵⁴ Labanca, *Oltremare, storia dell'espansione*, p. 90.

⁵⁵ Aquarone, *Dopo Adua: politica*, p. 67.

⁵⁶ Luigi Robecchi-Bricchetti, "La Somalia Italiana", *Nuova Antologia di scienze, lettere ed arti*, n. 124, (July, 1892), pp. 331-339.

government, by paying out the amount of 144,000 pounds, undertook the administration "of the cities, the ports and the territories of Benadir". After the liquidation of the Benadir company the government undertook the direct administration of the colony in February 14 1905; on June the parliament (157-71) and the senate (73-15) ratified the proceeding. It took three years for the first state organic law to be voted and implemented in Somalia.⁵⁷

Still, Somalia, in need of generous investments, did not improve significantly. The docking, public security and maritime communications problems remained unsolved. The Italians hesitated to outlaw the institution of slavery, fearing not without cause that it would lead to uncontrollable consequences, made some efforts to squash this inhumane practice.⁵⁸ Under the pressure of the public opinion and the press's denouncements banned slavery with the March 1903 decree. The new administration immediately faced the revolution of the dissatisfied by the Italian rule Bimal tribe, which was smouldering in the Italian lands since 1904. The severe conflict expanded to British Somalia too and absorbed exorbitant amounts and men for the final enforcement and consolidation of peace. In 1905 the Bimal laid siege to the Italian city of Merka for 9 months, only to be repelled by general Gherardo Pantano's (1868-1937) reinforcements in January 21 1905. After the defeat the insurgents turned for support and military supplies to Sayyid Mohammed Abdullah Hassan (1856-1920), the Mad Mullah as the British called him, already in guerilla and sacred war against the Ethiopians and the British in northern Somalia. Starting from the spring of 1901 the authorities of British Somalia had undertaken a series of military campaigns to limit his national liberation movement. Their Italian counterparts, still numb after the 1896 defeat, refused to participate, restricting their action in giving the British contingents free access through Obbia. Mullah after his encirclement retreated temporarily to Nogal, a territory within the Italian sphere of influence, in March 1905.⁵⁹

The belligerent situation in Somalia proved that the days that the Italians could preserve their influence, retaliate and pacify the coast through feeble military forces, small scale expeditions and naval bombardments were over. The April 5 1905 ordinance appointed an executive board and a civil government position with extraordinary military powers. Precisely three years later the Italian possessions were unified in a single colony under the name of Somalia Italiana. The conquest of the hinterland was deemed as indispensable in order to broaden Italian influence and to

⁵⁷ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, pp. 801-802.

⁵⁸ The April 20 1903 act gave to the governor the ability to establish courts, to operate under the general antislavery acts agreed in Bruxelles and not under the local Muslim one, in order to eradicate legally the human trafficking phenomenon in Somalia. It furthermore gave him the potentiality to declare the colony under the state of war as applied to Eritrea and to regulate the penitentiary's functions. See, Mellana, *L'Italia in Africa*, pp. 186-187

⁵⁹ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Africa*, p. 800.

ensure the colony's security and its agricultural-commercial development.⁶⁰ The colony's budgetary increment and a vast program of mercenaries' enlistment to the colonial forces were accordingly decided.⁶¹

As has been seen from the above, Italy tried to adopt a different *modus operandi* of colonial administration but the undertaking failed again. Neither the direct government administration attempted in Eritrea nor that through private companies produced the desired results. The common ground of the two failures and their common denominator was the lack of funds, means and experience. Rome's uncoordinated and fragmentary movements in the Red Sea and in the Indian Ocean were the result of instability, uncertainty and confusion. The Italian government, having undertaken in Eritrea more commitments than it could manage and amid a war of attrition, wished to disclaim its responsibilities in Somalia. After the developments in Ethiopia, the Italian economy could not withstand another black hole, which would absorb voraciously men and funds for the satisfaction of the Italian prestige. The constant armed conflicts of the militaristic regime in the colony of Eritrea, the defeat of 1896 and the anti-Africanists' and socialists' reactions forced the government to move behind the scenes in Benadir, from a position of security. Always with British aid Rome, rather than withdraw from Africa forever, considered appropriate to create another colony in 1889. Evading the responsibilities arising from the sovereignty over a nation, it contributed greatly to the underdevelopment of the Somali population. This fact hardly troubled the Italian imperialists, who, in any case, were seeking only one thing, adventure, conquests and prestige. This is precisely the mentality that contributed to the final bankruptcy of the Italian colonial system.

⁶⁰ During the first "direct rule" years the colony constituted a commercial failure. The overall transit trade taking place in Italian Somalia's ports was slightly but insufficiently increased. As for the agricultural sector, from 11 estate concessions to Italian immigrants, 7 were rapidly abandoned in 1907-1909. See *Ibid.*, p.828.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 806.

7. Italy and the scramble for China

The Adwa syndrome, weighed upon Italy's ruling class and stalled a decisive large scale operation for 15 years, when finally Italy occupied Libya in 1911. Of course, in the meantime, and despite the Adwa debacle's political and psychological repercussions the Italians continued the pursuit for colonial gains. Having suffered heavy losses and humiliation, and undergone a certain loss of prestige, the governments that followed Crispi, abandoned the independent, dynamic policy aiming to Italy's colonial expansion. Still in shock and fearing justifiably that another disaster would seal the fate of the nation's efforts to reach new heights and be recognized as a Great Power, they transformed Italian colonialism into a subtler, mild tempered policy. From then on Italy would always act collectively, in accordance and collaboration with the other Powers. Such was the case with China, in 1898-1901. An intervention or an expansion could not be justified as there was an absence of significant economic interests there. Still, with the Great Powers being commercially active and in possession of colonies in the Far East, Italy had no choice but to follow their lead.

On 2 February 1866, the corvette *Magenta* under captain Vittorio Arminjon, sailed for the Far East with the goal of establishing regular diplomatic and eventual commercial relations with China, Burma, Korea and Japan. The voyage was the by-product of a 1865 parliamentary inquest on the "oriental commerce", the economic possibilities that the Far East had to offer to the nascent Italian industry. The outcome of this survey stressed the necessity of strengthening the economic ties with the Far East, as other western states had already done and of installing official consular authorities. Moreover during that period the sericulture industry in Europe, was going through a grave crisis due to a mysterious epidemic, that decimated the required silkworms. In the 1850s Italian cocoon production was second only to the Chinese and up to 1876 it had generated profits of 281 million lire according to an official agricultural report.¹ Foreign Minister Venosta, considering the domestic silk industry's needs for the importation of low-priced and healthy silkworms, convinced the Prime Minister La Marmora to order the dispatch of a trade mission in China and Japan. The few Italian traders and individuals operating in Japan were until that time under the jurisdiction of the French consul. *Magenta* thus, apart from botanical and entomological goals had a crucial political mission.

The treaty of Yeddo (Edo) was signed on 25 August 1866 and provided for the exchange of plenipotentiaries, the installation of consuls in the Japanese ports open to foreign trade, their free transit in every part of the country and the positioning of a general agent in Tōkyō. Italian visitors were not allowed to leave the agreed ports. The Italians' extraterritoriality (exception from the local authority's legal system) and

¹ Francesca Crippa, *Una spedizione italiana nelle province sericole del Giappone (1896)*, (Pavia, 2006), pp. 18-19.

religious freedom were guaranteed, in line with the other Western-Japanese unequal treaties. In case of shipwreck the Japanese authorities were obligated to assist the castaways regardless of the port's availability. The financial part of the treaty, regarding the imposition of commerce regulations and duties on silk and tea would be revised in Yokohama on 1 June 1869. An additional Italian-Japanese commerce treaty was signed in 1894.² The first Italian ambassador in Tōkyō, Vittorio Sallier De la Tour³ urged his government to send a naval squadron in Yokohama in 1868 because "[...] I am well convinced that in this manner we would have every mean to organize and establish an Italian colony (community, editor's note) that would compete with those important ones in the South America".⁴ Count Litta, ambassador from March 1873 to October 1874, asserted: "I think that a naval station in Japanese waters would not be excessive".⁵

On 26 October 1866, Arminjon signed a similar treaty in Beijing, composed by 9 commercial regulations and 55 articles. Article 54, the most essential one, secured for Italy the most favoured nation clause, opened 9 Chinese ports to the Italian trade and permitted the installation of Florence's (at that time the capital) representative in Beijing. In February 1871, Carlo Alberto Racchia commanding the corvette *Principessa Clotilde* concluded a trade treaty in Rangoon, as has been already seen. This treaty boosted substantially the presence of the Italian trade in Burma, as is demonstrated by the number of Italian ships that docked there. Whereas 50 made their berth there in 1871 and 78 in 1872 the figure rose to more than 200 in 1873. Nevertheless, when British and German shipping companies commenced operations in those waters, the antagonism proved overwhelming for the Italian trade still conducted by vessels powered by wind rather than steam.⁶

Rome enjoyed a short period of "primacy" in Japan and not just due to the profitable trade: Italy imported silkworms, rice, porcelain and ceramics while exported to Japan coral grains, butter, gun powder and quinine. Raffaele Ulisse Barbolani (1818-1900), the Italian ambassador in Japan from 1877 to 1882, witnessing German prince Albert Wilhelm Heinrich's (1862-1929) visit to Tōkyō to decorate the Japanese Emperor in 1879, contacted urgently the Italian government so

² Efforts for the conclusion of a trade agreement had been undertaken in 1861 and 1863 by Cristoforo Negri, always eager to promote the Italian trade in the Orient, without tangible results. Again in 1863 Costantino Nigra, the Italian ambassador to Paris tried to conclude a similar treaty with a Japanese delegation there, thus sparing Rome the expenses of a mission to Japan, but to no avail. The 1866 convention can be considered a great success if the fact that at the time Italy was involved to the Austro-Prussian war is taken into consideration. See Romano Ugolini, "Lo Stato Liberale Italiano e l'eta Meiji, Atti del 1 Convegno Italian-Giapponese di studi storici", Conference, (Rome 23-27 September 1985), p. 134.

³ De la Tour was the first foreign diplomat to present his credentials to the Emperor on 4 January 1869. He also was the first to be allowed to escort a team of foreigners, in particular Italian silk traders, to Saitama to examine the cultivations on June 1869. See *Ibid.*, p. 138.

⁴ Crippa, *Una spedizione italiana*, pp. 16, 26-27.

⁵ Ugolini, "Lo Stato Liberale Italiano e l'eta Meiji", p. 139.

⁶ Ciro Paoletti, *La Marina Italiana in Estremo Oriente, 1866-2000*, (Rome, 2000), pp. 14-15.

that it would respond accordingly and safeguard its influence. Thus, on 8 August 1879, Tommaso, duke of Genoa visited for the second time (the first in 1873) the Japanese court bearing honorary medals for the Emperor, who, by boarding the Italian ship Vettor Pisani, completed an act of historical importance: it was the first time that a Japanese Emperor set foot "abroad". The historic event took place on 7 January 1881. Initially at Nagasaki and later (24 November) in Yokohama Tommaso was received with the highest honours, symbol of mutual respect and benevolence. The duke entered into personal friendship with numerous members of the government and the court during his stay augmenting the Italian prestige and reputation. Barbolani, the architect of the visit's great success also organized the Duke's trip to Korea to investigate the possibilities of its market and Taiwan to ascertain its value as a potential Italian colony in a two-fold exploration-reconnaissance mission.⁷

The bilateral relations were further strengthened when the Italian prince received, in 1882, a Japanese delegation in Italy and when in 1884 three Italian artillery officers were requested and dispatched to supervise the organization of Ōsaka's arsenal.⁸ In Tōkyō a Fine Arts school, in which Italian artists taught, was established in 1876. For prince Arisugawa Taruhito (1835-1895) Italy was the friendliest foreign power in 1883 while for Foreign Minister Inoue Kaoru (1836-1915) in 1887, Italy was "a real friend, without concealed intentions and the Great Mother of the Western nations from whom they should search for examples". Arusikawa visited Italy from 2 to 12 August 1882 as a member of a military mission. In Japan in 1888, under his aegis, an Italian-Japanese society was created to promote the bilateral relations, the mutual knowledge of the two civilizations and the study of the Italian language.⁹ During the "golden age" of the Italian-Japanese relations, an illustrious delegation, the Iwakura mission, organized by the statesman Iwakura Tomomi (1825-1883), was dispatched to Europe and U.S. The mission visited Italy on May and June 1873. The tour lasted two years, during which the delegation studied every aspect of modern states' organization imaginable (administration, education and legal system, prisons, factories, mines, shipyards and so on). Under the previous shogunate regime, voyages abroad, undertaken by a small number of politicians, servicemen, intellectuals, merchants or students were infrequent and sporadic.¹⁰

The aforementioned ambassador De la Tour, had witnessed the turbulent political situation that resulted to the Shogun's overthrow. Unlike his European colleagues he did not choose sides. His non-intervention, was a clear political statement: Italy was liberal, sympathetic to a newborn fellow nation that presented a certain structural similarity and respected its independence. His successor Fe'

⁷ Francesco Zavarese, "Commercio e Diplomazia: Le occasioni perse dall'Italia con il Giappone negli anni 1873-1899", second part in *Il Giappone*, n. 44 (2004), p. 144-146.

⁸ Paoletti, *La Marina Italiana in Estremo Oriente*, pp. 18-19.

⁹ Ugolini, "Lo Stato Liberale Italiano e l'eta Meiji", p. 144.

¹⁰ Shōko Iwakura, "Viaggiatori Giapponesi in Italia prima e dopo la missione Iwakura" in *Italiani nel Giappone Meiji (1868-1912)*, ed. T. Ciapparoni, P. Fedi, M. T. Lucidi, International Conference, (8-11 November 2007), pp. 55-56.

d'Ostiani (Alessandro Fe' d'Ostiani 1825-1905), proposed and promoted the Italian liberal state as the model to be followed and by the late 19th century some Japanese, terrorized by the warmongering western regimes, seemed to be attracted to it. Furthermore, Fe' d'Ostiani, during his mandate declared that he was disposed to review the unequal treaties, something that no other western authority was willing to discuss.¹¹ The enlargement of the state and the capture of Rome on 20 September 1870, the most prestigious and holly city of the Western world proved that Italian unification was a successful endeavour and a suitable role model for Japan according to the Italian diplomats. It also confirmed that Italy in order to promote its modernization and prosperity did not hesitate to clash even with the influential traditions of the past such as the Catholic Church.¹²

Japan a "latecomer" state looked for models of organization and modernization paradigms amidst the late 19th century industrial and imperialistic world order. It seemed to have found them in Italy and Germany, which were equally young and thus faced initially, *mutatis mutandis*, similar administrative and political challenges. The Japanese 1868 experience, the amalgamation of the until then semi-autonomous domains in one state under a new supreme authority is definitely reminiscent of the mid 1850s Prussian and Piedmontese struggle to unite the numerous principalities, kingdoms and free cities in the German world and in the Italian peninsula respectively. Moreover, the inexperienced ruling classes of Japan, distressed by the pressure and aggression of the Western colonial Powers also in Asia sought allies. Early German and Italian governments appeared to be more pacifist and liberal compared to the expansionist French and Russians.¹³ Under this point of view the Risorgimento ideals of emancipation and self-determination had an auspicious as well as a symbolic impact to certain progressive Japanese ruling classes, which were still taking shape. Rome, appeared able to assist Japan in its challenging modernization process in the 1870s-1880s, since its own inherent internal deficiencies

¹¹In 1873 the Italian and the Japanese authorities negotiated a treaty according to which Italian citizens would obtain the right to freely travel throughout the country in exchange for the revision of the extraterritoriality principle. The Powers, unwilling to relinquish their privileges opposed and practically forbade the undertaking. Kavalam Panikkar, *Storia della dominazione Europea in Asia dal cinquecento ai nostri giorni*, (Turin, 1958), p.222.

¹²Romano Ugolini, "La missione Iwakura in Italia: l'inizio del periodo aureo nelle relazioni italian-giapponesi (1873-1896)" in *Il Giappone scopre l'Occidente: una missione diplomatica (1871-73)*, ed. K. Kaikan, (Rome, 1994) pp. 32-35.

¹³Germany was not so benevolent as the Japanese had initially thought and its participation to the anti-Japanese Triple Intervention in 1895 surely attests to this notion. During the Japanese civil war of 1868-1869, Max von Brandt (1835-1920) the German consul in Beijing and later in Tōkyō, proposed to his government the capture of Hokkaido or any other territory in case that the Japanese state collapsed. Bismarck at the time, was still unwilling to engage in hazardous colonial ventures and rebuffed the proposal after considering the operational limitations. The choice to not intervene was a well calculated political move and not a display of Germany's cordiality. Despite the Japanese admiration of everything German, Bismarck described the Japanese rural population as "a bunch of semisavages with murderous instincts" and he refused to recognize the formal equality of the two imperial families. See Bernd Martin, *Japan and Germany in the Modern World*, (Oxford, 1995), pp. 29-32.

were unknown to Tōkyō. Italy did not represent a direct threat to Japan's sovereignty, since it was not a major military power a fact that reassured Tōkyō of the friendly unselfish Italian intentions. The common path towards industrialization and similar "historical, economic and political situation"¹⁴ created in both sides a sensation of trust and mutual understanding. The fact that Japan like Italy was militarily vulnerable from the sea, as it possessed an extensive coast line that required coastal fortifications, gave rise to a series of military-scientific missions to Italy. In 1885 the Tanaka mission visited La Spezia's dockyards and maritime facilities and in March 1887 Admiral Saigō Tsugumichi (1843-1902) visited Italy to inspect defensive and artillery installations. In August 1877 the Japanese government wary that its foreign legal advisors were in fact serving their individual states' interests in Japan, rather than the Japanese, like for instance the German Heinrich Philip von Siebold (1852-1908), sought the services of an impartial expert and asked in a confidential manner the transfer of an Italian jurist to Japan. When Prince Tokugawa Iesato (1863-1940) directed the question to the Italian Foreign Ministry, Crispi suggested and sent in January 1889 the law professor Alessandro Paternostro (1852-1899). He contributed to the development of the internal Japanese legislation and even authored the Emperor's speech for the inauguration of the parliament.¹⁵ On 25 November 1884 the newspaper *Jiji shimpō* praised Italy for its institutions and its liberal ways in contrast to the German oppressive political system.

Progressively though the Italian silk trade lost its impetus and the value of the mutual commercial transactions declined. In the 1890s the perpetual deficiencies of the Italian economy and the Adwa defeat, a year after Japan's victorious emergence from the Sino-Japanese war (1894-1895), reduced Italy to a second grade power in the Japanese eyes.¹⁶ In 1895 the ardent advocate of expansionism, Crispi allegedly approved the installation of a maritime connection from Naples to Yokohama and the establishment of trade stations in Hainan and Taiwan.¹⁷ It was too late.¹⁸ Everyone in Japan could sense the antithesis between Garibaldian ideals and dominance over African and Asian populations. The commercial decline and the African developments harmed irreversibly Japan's admiration for Italy. Thus the once cordial relations eventually grew cold and Rome turned its gaze towards Beijing. It would be

¹⁴ Zavarese, "Commercio e Diplomazia", p. 140, 148.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 147-148.

¹⁶ Paoletti, *La Marina Italiana in Estremo Oriente*, pp. 21. According to the historian Ugolini early Italian-Japanese relations can be classified as following: 1861-1873, when the mutual relations were exclusively dictated by commercial interests, 1873-1896, the "gold" period, during which the common adversity towards the French and Russian expansion shaped the two states' political alignment and finally 1896 and beyond when the relations downgraded to a phase of disinterest. See Ugolini, "Lo Stato Liberale Italiano e l'eta Meiji", pp. 132-133.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 146-147.

¹⁸ A Ministerial committee had approved the connection of Italy with Yokohama as early as 1877 and the Rubattino company appeared inclined to complete it in 1879. The inherent Italian obstructiveness and financial insufficiencies undermine the creation of a stable diplomatic-consular network and hindered the maritime connection project. See Zavarese, "Commercio e Diplomazia", p. 137.

there, where in 1899-1901 the Japanese foreign policy, after having dispersed any utopian illusions and having espoused the disciplines of colonialism would collaborate with the Italian one, as equal rapacious partners. The last glimpse of an understanding, a remnant of the golden diplomatic period was the fact that Italy was the third power after Great Britain on 16 July 1894, and USA on 22 November, to abandon its privileges abolishing the unequal treaties on 1 December 1894.

At the time foreign relations with Qing China (under the Qing or Manchu dynasty) were regulated by two unequal treaties, the peace treaties of the first (1839-1842) and the second Opium wars (1856-1860). The 1842 treaty signed in Nanjing was the first to open five Chinese ports to western trade impose a fixed trade tariff in these ports. Moreover, it granted a 21 million silver dollars indemnity and ceded Hong Kong to the conflict's victor, the British Empire.¹⁹ A year later the British acquired the most favoured nation clause for their commerce in China (treaty of Bogue) and extraterritoriality for their nationals operating there. Subsequently the United States in July 1844 and France in October 1844 signed identical parasitic unequal treaties and obtained every privilege the British had acquired.²⁰ The second Opium war, between China and a British-French-Russian-American consortium, was fought in two distinct phases and it resulted in a series of peace agreements. The June 1858 Tianjin treaty opened another 11 ports, permitted to the four foreign powers to erect embassies (legations) in Beijing, to navigate freely on the Yangtze River, to enter in the country's interior and forced China to pay indemnities to Britain and France. The treaty of Aigun in 1858 and its supplemental one two years later ceded the left bank of the Amur River and a region of Manchuria's Pacific coast to Russia, where the city of Vladivostok would be built. Despite the armistice the military operations continued, to China's detriment, until 18 October 1860 when the Convention of Beijing brought the war to an end. The Convention opened the port of Tianjin to the foreigners, ceded Kowloon, the hinterland opposite to Hong Kong to Britain, and legalized the despicable opium trade.²¹ More importantly it granted unlimited religious freedom which signified civil equality for the Chinese Christians and freedom of action for the European and American missionaries. As all this was not enough, the Taiping revolution or, more precisely, civil war raged from 1850 until 1864 and resulted in total devastation and a number of deaths that astonishingly rose above 20 million.

The Tianjin treaty provisions reduced progressively China into an easy prey, a vast field for illegal activities, abuses and adventurism where the legitimate

¹⁹ Peter Ward Fay, *The Opium War 1840-1842, Barbarians in the Celestial Empire in the Early Part of the Nineteenth Century and the War by Which They Forces Her Gates Ajar*, (Chapel Hill, 1997), p. 392.

²⁰ Paul H. Clemens, *The Boxer Rebellion, a political and diplomatic review*, (New York, 1915), pp. 20-22.

²¹ For the deplorable effects of British Opium upon the Chinese population and the conflict it caused see W. Travis Hanes, Frank Sanello, *The Opium Wars, The Addiction of One Empire and the Corruption of Another*, (Naperville, 2002).

government's sovereign rights were systematically violated by the colonial powers. Through economic penetration, as in the case of the Americans, (open door policy)²² or by threats and resorting to violence (gunboat diplomacy)²³ China had taken the place of the Ottoman Empire as the international's system "great patient". European communities exploiting their commerce and residence permits in Nanjing, Canton, Amoy, Hankow, Ningbo and other cities, established courthouses, boroughs, public security and sanitary services thus creating states within the state. In these settlements the Chinese administration and laws were unenforceable.

Besides the settlements the colonial powers possessed the so-called concessions, scattered along the Chinese coastline.²⁴ In the 1850s-1860s British merchants decided to address the trade deficit with China as the value of British exports to China was immensely inferior to that of the imports by pressuring their government to "obtain access generally to the whole interior of the Chinese Empire", which meant the imposition of a sphere of influence at least up to the Yangtze valley.²⁵ Unsurprisingly though China, couldn't at the time absorb both the British and the German (second in commercial activity) industrial surplus production. Since the trade activity yielded no profits the Powers sought investment opportunities that subsequently would allow them to exert an even tighter political control and demanded railway, navigation and mineral concessions, among others. China was not carved up by the Powers as was Africa. Nevertheless foreign citizens, adequately protected by the treaty port system and convinced of their civilization's moral and material superiority built factories, instituted banks,²⁶ ran steamships, published

²²The note of the American Secretary of State John Milton Hey (1838-1905) to the Powers, on 6 September 1899, was suggesting trade with China on an equal basis. The proposal implied the integrity of the Chinese state and recommended the "equality of treatment as to harbour dues and railroad charges in the various spheres" and the non-interference with any treaty-port or vested interests of the sphere of interest or leased territory of any Power. See Clemens, *The Boxer Rebellion*, p. 37.

²³ Since the article 52 of the Tianjin treaty permitted the navigation of the Yangtze River the foreign warships could monitor, control, bombard or threaten to do so cities even in the deep Chinese hinterland.

²⁴ Settlements were foreign zones, spontaneously created and implanted in a Chinese city. China had the nominal sovereignty of the territory in which foreign residents and natives were situated. Nevertheless, they were answerable only to the locally elected foreign administration. In contrast, the concessions were the result of the Chinese government officially consigning to a foreign state a territory in perpetuity. According to the German juridical doctrine a concession could be considered completed or not, depending on the foreigners' potentiality to acquire or lease propriety. See Ludovica De Courten, Giovanni Sarger, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente 1900-1901*, (Rome, 2005), pp. 92-93.

²⁵ This measure would somehow drive the Chinese to buy more British products. For the details of the British trade's value in China during that period see J. Y. Wong, *Deadly dreams. Opium, Imperialism and the Arrow war (1856-1860) in China*, (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 333-365.

²⁶ Since 1848 the Oriental Banking Corporation and the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China, were operating in China. The Deutsche Asiatische Bank was established in 1899 in Shanghai with the participation of the Deutsche Bank. In the same year the Banque d'Indochine opened a branch in Shanghai; in 1896 the Russo-Chinese Bank was inaugurated, mainly with French capital. See Ludovica

newspapers, administered the post and supervised the operation of the customs.²⁷ Westerners did not content themselves just by the semi-colonial exploitation of the Chinese territory; they pushed for more by penetrating the dependency of Manchuria and by signing commercial treaties with Korea in 1876 and 1882, a nominal vassal of Beijing.²⁸

The greatest plague for China was the missionary activity, which intensified after the opening of the country's interior in 1842. The 1860 agreements gave to the missionaries legal protection and the possibility to buy property and erect buildings anywhere in the empire and not just to the treaty ports. The political, commercial and in a lesser degree religious activity was a valuable instrument in the hands of the consuls and their respective governments; even the assault or murder of the missionaries was covertly welcomed as long as it led to more concessions and privileges. Hobson notes that the unfortunate Chinese watched with distrust and anxiety first the arrival of the missionaries, whose "Church was an imperium in imperio", then of the consul and finally of the invading armies. It was not a mystery that the local authorities hated²⁹ these apparently devout people who by exercising military and political power, through their consulates and gunships, used the Chinese that had converted to Christianity to exert pressure upon the Qing government and to promote their country's interests.³⁰ In 1867 when a British evangelist establishment in Yangzhou was set on fire the British consul accompanied by four warships demanded and achieved the local magistrate's dismissal. Likewise when two French missionary buildings were sacked, Paris' consul ascended the Yangtze River with two warships and boldly threatened and humiliated the Chinese viceroy in Nanjing. It was common practice for the French apostolic authorities to protest and ask for reparations from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Zongli Yamen) every time they encountered an obstacle in regard to their "religious" activities.³¹ Lorenzo Maria Balconi (1878-1969) who would become vicar in Nanyang in 1901 documented that the missionaries in China "almost always combined their apostolic missions with the survey of the regions they passed". Father Geroni acted accordingly when in a voyage to Shanxi took notes on the possibility of exploiting mines and on the Chinese army barrack's location. Another Italian vicar, father Scarella admitted that he held powers equal to a "provincial governor".³² For Hobson the "predatory expeditions" to impose commerce

De Courten, *La marina mercantile italiana e la politica di espansione (1860-1914)*, *Industria, Finanza e Trasporti Maritimi*, (Rome, 1989), p. 258.

²⁷ Fay, *The Opium War 1840-1842*, pp. 394-395.

²⁸ Panikkar, *Storia della dominazione Europea*, pp. 192-202.

²⁹ The diplomat Manfredi Gravina di Ramacca (1883-1932) who in 1905 would become vice consul in Shanghai, wrote: "Missionaries are without doubt the main reason of the Chinese hatred for strangers all together [...] religious propaganda as is conducted today, constitutes without doubt a mistake, because it is a continuous reason for turmoil in the foreign-Chinese relations". See De Courten, Sarger, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente*, p. 59.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 53.

³¹ Panikkar, *Storia della dominazione Europea*, 187.

³² De Courten, Sarger, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente* p. 77.

by force, the violent exaction of commercial and political concessions as punishment for sporadic acts of retaliation, the exchange of missionary blood for the opening of new ports, territories, access routes, the assumption of political authority and the arrogant and extensive use of the right of extraterritoriality, aptly demonstrated the historical falsity of the pretexts that animated and regulated Christianity's foreign policy.³³ The Chinese were astonished to see Christian clergymen making use of diplomacy and force to outpace and compete against their counterparts from other nations.³⁴

In regard to the ecclesiastical antagonism, France was the only one among the four Powers that was allowed to retain an embassy, a permanent representation, in Beijing after the Opium Wars, as was the only Catholic one, as has been already examined. Although Spain (1864), Belgium (1865), Italy (1866), Austria-Hungary (1869) had also signed treaties with the Chinese Empire, Paris had commenced regular diplomatic relations earlier and thus enjoyed a kind of religious predominance. With the 1858 treaty of Tianjin³⁵ and the subsequent of 1860, Beijing officially recognized Paris' right to protect the missionary missions, a development that was certain to promote French influence in the Orient.³⁶ French consular authorities in China issued the required travel documents to the missionaries aiming at preaching in the interior; all the missionaries therefore, regardless of their nationality had to acquire a Chinese-French passport. The Holy See amidst its struggle against the usurper of the Pontiff's spiritual and worldly patrimony, the false secular Italian state, turned repeatedly for support to Paris. The latter, always eager to exert a prestigious and at the same time universal religious primacy under the Pope's auspices, maintained cordial relations with him that were mutually beneficial. The French-Vatican secret alliance was in function anti-Italian and by consequence against the menacing Triple Alliance. However, as a result of the cessation of Bismarck's internal anti-ecclesiastical policy (*kulturkampf*) in 1880 some Curia (Vatican's advisory and administrative bureau) members began to see in a positive light the German and Italian policies as a counterweight to Paris' asphyxiating preponderance. In any case, the Vatican, lacking alternative choices, entrusted the protection of the missionary missions in Asia primarily to France, from the 1850s until the beginning of the 20th century.³⁷

³³ John A. Hobson, *L'imperialismo*, ed. L. Meldolesi, (Milan, 1974), p. 204.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

³⁵ The 1858 agreement explicitly asserted that: the Chinese officials could not intervene in the propagation of the Christian faith and in the erection of religious buildings (article 9) and the missionaries, bearing the appropriate documents, were able to undertake their work in every part of China (article 13). See Lodovico Nocentini, "La Francia e i nostri missionari in Cina", *Nuova Antologia di scienze, lettere ed arti*, n. 165 (June 1899), p. 495.

³⁶ De Courten, Sargeri, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente* pp. 60-61.

³⁷ Since Russia was orthodox, Britain and Germany mainly protestant, Spain and Portugal exerted meager influence on colonial matters and Vatican's relations with Italy were initially hostile (but more sympathetic in Africa), Paris was conscious and confident of the Popes' preference. See Luciano

Timoleone Raimondi (1827-1894), the apostolic vicar of Hong Kong in 1874 stated: "It is absolutely necessary to make clear to the Chinese that Catholics are not just French but from any nation". The first Italian Minister Plenipotentiary in China, Ferdinando De Luca, taking advantage of the Tonkin war (1884-1885), visited in 1884 many Italian missionary missions and delivered to their members, documents that would distinguish and freed them from the French jurisdiction. On 15 September 1884, he communicated officially to the Zongli Yamen his decision to assume, without intermediates, the complete protection of the Italian missionaries in China. This development met the approval of the Foreign Minister Mancini and, as expected, the wrath of the French ambassador in Beijing, Jules Patenotre (1845-1925). On 15 March 1885 the Chinese ambassador in Rome reassured Mancini that "there have been given renewed orders to the provincial authorities to considerably protect the Italian missionaries". Likewise, in January 1886 the Germans instituted the apostolic vicariate of Shantung, where the first German bishop in China was placed. The independent actions of the Italians and the Germans were condemned by the still pro-French Vatican.³⁸

As a result of the Sino-French war that led to the concession of northern Vietnam to Paris with the treaty of Tianjin in 1885, and the resulting resentment, the Chinese approached diplomatically the Holy See. Their proposal, backed by the British, was the inauguration of a regular representation mission, virtually an embassy, of the Vatican in Beijing (Apostolic Nunciature) so as to nullify the French Christian protectorate. Apropos, Pope Leo XIII assembled the cardinals' congress on 15 March 1886. During its proceedings, several, mostly Italian, cardinals argued that Paris "uses the protectorate as a weapon, as an instrument to increase its national influence in the Orient" and that "France desires to maintain the protectorate for political purposes". Cardinal Wladimir Czacki (1834-1888) represented the pro-French section of the council. On 11 April 1886 the Holy See opted for the middle way solution. It communicated to the Chinese and French authorities that it could not ignore Paris' actions for the sake of Christianity and its privileges; however, it nominated the cardinal Antonio Agliardi (1832-1915) to represent the Vatican and erect an embassy in the Chinese capital. Upon being made aware of the decision, French Prime Minister Freycinet threatened to sever bilateral relations in case the Nuncio left for China. In front of an ultimatum such as this Pope Leo was forced to put off the undertaking in September 1886 sine die.³⁹

Still in 1888 the Vatican, through the Propaganda Fide congregation, confirmed the institutional equality of the missionaries assigned to the Chinese provincial governors and the French spiritual protectorate in the Orient. This declaration sparked vivid protests from the German delegation to the Zongli Yamen.

Trincia, "La Santa Sede tra attività missionaria e interessi delle potenze europee in Estremo Oriente", *Annali dell'Istituto italiano-germanico in Trento*, v. 24, 1998, pp. 260-261.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 262-263.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 270-272.

Many Italian missionaries despite the fact that they were no longer obligated to carry the French passport did not really wish to discard it. French warships and consulates in any part of the country seemed to offer adequate protection while French financial support and even gifts were irresistible incentives.⁴⁰ Inaugurated in 1887 in Florence, the National Association for assisting Italian Missionaries, except its declared objective, attempted to promote national consciousness and the Italian presence in Asia and Africa. Successful propaganda would give rise to the Italian prestige and influence simultaneously hampering Paris' prominent position. In the spring of 1888 Crispi claimed: "Only the Italian government has the right and duty to protect its citizens abroad" and the "The king's government will recognize the passports that non-Italian authorities issue to Italian citizens in China no more and I believe that I can count on the Imperial Government to consider these passports as invalid and by consequence useless". In May, as a response to Crispi's pleads, Vatican's mouthpiece, the Propaganda Fide urged every missionary operating in China to recognize and respect Paris' protectorate. On 11 February 1890 it communicated to Raimondi, the most active vicar combating French influence, that the Italian missionaries could not accept any subsidy and concession from the Italian state and that they were not allowed to enact or even honour official visits to Italian officials and royalties. This "blockade" was maintained even after Crispi's dismissal when the French-Italian relations arguably improved. The issue returned to the scene after the Boxer Uprising (1899-1901) when the Chinese indemnity to the missionaries had to be distributed to each nation's individual representatives. Apparently Paris could not claim the entire amount for itself. Nonetheless three years would elapse before a new Vatican congress addressed the matter on 21 January and 4 February 1904. The right to protect its religious servicemen was finally acknowledged to Rome, enhancing its influence. The missionaries were entitled to choose for themselves in which authority they desired to belong.⁴¹

On August 1894 the first Sino-Japanese war (1894-1895) started over the question of the independence of Korea, for centuries a tributary to the Chinese court. Japan, which previously had signed itself three unequal treaties with Korea (1876, 1882, 1885), adopting the imperialist powers' methods, aspired to place the country under its influence. Deeply concerned about its strategic security, Meiji Japan was anxious to evade the colonial grip stretching menacingly around it. Its military prevalence during the South Manchuria campaign demonstrated the astonishing results of its modernization and at the same time Qing China's inability to catch up. The Shimonoseki peace treaty concluded on 17 April 1895, obliged China to recognize Korea's independence, grant an indemnity of 200 million taels, and cede Taiwan, the Pescadores and the Liadong peninsula; the former was restored to China for a further 30 million taels under unrelenting pressure by Russia, France and Germany on 23 April. The Chinese government, lastly, conceded the most favoured

⁴⁰ Nocentini, "La Francia e i nostri missionari", pp. 497-503.

⁴¹ Trincia, "La Santa Sede", pp. 280-285.

nation clause to Japan and opened another four ports to trade. Being incapable of satisfying the war reparations, Beijing resorted to foreign lending, compensating the powers with mineral, railway and territory concessions.⁴²

The apparent feebleness of the Chinese attracted and brought out the innate rapacious propensity of European imperialism. Saint Petersburg, put in motion an informal colonization programme in Northern China, through political and economic penetration, carved out by the Finance Minister Sergei Yulyevich Witte (1849-1915). Through the medium of the Chinese Eastern Railway Company, created in 1896 as a branch of the Russo-Chinese Bank, the Russians undertook the construction and operation of a line that would link the Trans-Siberian railway, initiated in 1891, to Vladivostok. In 1898 they secured Chinese consensus to extend the line, across Manchuria and the Liaodong peninsula to Port Arthur and the Dairen port, both of which were granted under a lease to the Russians. As expected cities, such as Harbin and entire regions that were situated along the line were transformed into exclusive Russian economic zones where, Russian authority was enforced by courthouses and consulates.⁴³ The Russo-French Entente, officially in effect since the 4th of January 1894 as a counterweight to the Triple Alliance, but essentially to check Germany's politico-military predominance, expanded in the Orient as well. Indeed the Russians in the North and the French from their Indochina colony seemed to have encircled China placing it in a vice.⁴⁴ Aiming to enlarge their sphere of influence in the southern Chinese province of Yunnan, which was adjacent to Indochina, French policy makers devised plans for a railway to connect the two regions and leased Guangzhou Wan (Kouang-Tchéou-Wan) as a military base in 1898. In response the British pushed on to solidify their primacy in the Yangtze valley, the hinterland of Shanghai. In the summer of 1897 they obtained Chinese permission to open to western trade the Hsi Chiang river (Xi river), in June 1898 they acquired the New Kowloon area for 99 years and a month later they leased Weihaiwei. Paris perceived these actions as a provocation and exerted pressure to the Chinese government for the extension of its proposed railway up to Nanjing (part of the presumptive British sphere of interests), more mineral concessions in Guangxi, Yunnan and Guangdong and the Chinese commitment that they would never cede the island of Hainan to another power.⁴⁵ The Qing administration very reluctantly⁴⁶ had permitted to foreign companies to construct two railway lines: from Canton to Hankow and from Hankow to Beijing. The former was built by the American Development Company and the latter by a French-Belgian consortium, subsidized by the Russo-Chinese Bank. The

⁴² De Courten, Sarger, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente*, p. 17.

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 97-98.

⁴⁴ Lodovico Nocentini, "L'Europa nell'Estremo Oriente dopo l'alleanza franco-russa", *Nuova Antologia di scienze, lettere ed arti*, n. 155 (September 1897), p. 276.

⁴⁵ Paoletti, *La Marina Italiana in Estremo Oriente*, p. 24.

⁴⁶ The imperial decree of 27 August 1889 permitting, originally, the construction of railways was annulled due to the financial strain and the opposition of the conservative Qing Ministers. It was certain that in case of hostilities the colonial powers would utilize the lines to transport their troops in the interior, an eventuality that preoccupied the court. See Lodovico Nocentini, "Varieta, Le strade ferrate nella Cina", *Nuova Antologia di scienze, lettere ed arti*, n. 120 (December 1891), pp. 764-769.

Hankow to Beijing line raised suspicions of an eventual threat from the Manchuria-Tonkin axis, a Russo-French strategic coup aimed at London, which perceived the concession as a hostile act and threatened Beijing with the use of force.⁴⁷ On 1 November 1897 two German missionaries were killed in Shandong. With that pretext the Germans claimed and acquired not just the port-town of Qingdao but the adjacent 50 kilometre zone expanding their control in the whole region. The Powers pushed forward in the interior, having as a start line their concessions, to secure exclusive rights and spheres of influence: the Germans in Shandong, the British in Yangtze, the French in the southern provinces bordering Indochina, the Japanese in the zone opposite to Taiwan (Fukien),⁴⁸ and the Russians in Manchuria.⁴⁹ The partition was on. After all the havoc the Minister of the Zongli Yamen, decided to draw the line and in December 1898 communicated to every consulate that the sell-out had come to an end. That was the moment when Italy chose to act.⁵⁰

As for Italy, its inherent organizational and financial difficulties were apparent in China as well with the absence of sufficient consular representation and of an adequate information network.⁵¹ During the third quarter of the 19th century Piedmont (after 17 March 1861 the Kingdom of Italy) occasionally entrusted the protection of the sparse Italian citizens in the Orient to British consuls and merchants operating there. Having London's consent, Cavour between 1858 and 1860 nominated the merchants John Dent and James Hogg as Piedmont's authorized consuls in Hong Kong and Shanghai respectively. The latter was to be replaced by Lorenzo Vignale in 1869. The consulate in Tianjin had always remained vacant until it was merged with the Shanghai one with a royal decree on 28 February 1884. Another decree that of 18 April 1901, reinstated it as a consulate along Canton's and Shanghai's representation offices. In 1886, Sonnino, at the time a Deputy, commenting the eventuality of erecting a legation under a minister-plenipotentiary in Beijing insisted: "I think that we are still very poor to permit to ourselves a great luxury which does not offer an equivalent profit". The Italian legations in Beijing were established in 1889 under Lorenzo Friozi di Cariati, Alberto Pansa⁵² and Alessandro Bardi.⁵³ Giuseppe Salvago Raggi (1866-1946) was appointed as secretary in May 1897 and then, after a brief intermission when ambassador Renato de Martino took charge as Italy's

⁴⁷ Panikkar, *Storia della dominazione Europea*, pp. 202-203.

⁴⁸ Tōkyō's interest for the region was concretely verified when, during the 1900 turmoil, it dispatched forces with the purpose of protecting its few nationals in the region. See "I Giapponesi ad Amoy", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 201, Friday-Saturday 31 August-1 September, p. 2.

⁴⁹ Clemens, *The Boxer Rebellion*, p. 36.

⁵⁰ Paoletti, *La Marina Italiana in Estremo Oriente*, p. 25.

⁵¹ Alessandro Vagnini, *L'Italia e l'imperialismo giapponese in Estremo Oriente. La missione del Partito Nazionale Fascista in Giappone e nel Manciukuò*, (Rome 2015), p. 16.

⁵² Pansa recorded on 4 June 1892 that at the time 4 ships of Italian ownership were docking in Chinese ports in contrast to the 8862 British, 1290 German and 226 Austro-Hungarian. See Rosaria Quartararo, "L'affare di San-Mun. Un episodio dell'imperialismo coloniale italiano alla fine del secolo XIX", *Clio Rivista trimestrale di studi storici*, 33/3 (1997), p. 226.

⁵³ Until then Holland, Belgium and the U.S. leased their embassies in Beijing while France, Germany, Japan, Russia and Spain fully owned theirs. See De Courten, Sarger, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente*, p. 86.

plenipotentiary in April 1899, as director of the legation. He would go on to command Italian Somalia (1906-1907). In November 1900 Raggi informed the Foreign Minister Giulio Prinetti (1851-1908) about his intention to enlarge the Italian legation so that it could accommodate Italian troops in case of turmoil. In September 1901 he succeeded in expanding the Italian territory by 59 square kilometres.⁵⁴

In 1890 the Italian commerce in China was not even recorded in the relative statistics. In spite of ambassador De Luca's pleas dating as back as 1881, the sole maritime connection linking Italy with China, from 1893 onwards, was enacted by the company Navigazione Generale: from Genoa to Bombay and from there, through Singapore, to Hong Kong. Yet some sporadic entrepreneurial initiatives took place. The Peking Syndicate of mixed Anglo-Italian capital was inaugurated in 1896 with the goal of making the most of eventual railway and mining concessions in Northern China. The Italian partners of the company ended up relinquishing all its stocks to the British. The Italian industrial Consortium for the commerce with the Far East (Consortio industriale Italiano per il commercio con l'Estremo Oriente), created in Milan in 1896, sustained by industrial and shipping cycles, established agencies in Hong Kong and Shanghai, among other important trade centres. In any case, the association failed to promote the Italian economic interests in China and proved unable to generate substantial profits. A society with identical objectives, the Italian industrial Union for the exporting commerce (Unione industriale Italiana per il commercio d'esportazione), was established in Turin in 1897. Soon afterwards it declared the bankruptcy of its Shanghai branch. The Foreign Ministry, hosted on its grounds an industrial conference on February 1898, with the twofold aim of advertising investment potentials and of examining the most befitting way to increase the Italian transit trade in the Orient. The discourse was downgraded to a trivial conversation of wishful thinking and impractical proposals. A few scholars and orientalist and some exploration and geographic associations, such as the Italian Geographical Society, were the only parties to demonstrate a concrete interest for the Far Eastern markets.⁵⁵

During the Sino-Japanese conflict, cordial relations with Tōkyō⁵⁶ and economic aspirations in China propelled the government to declare its neutrality. Foreign Minister Alberto Blanc, after some assaults on Christian citizens and missionaries, which took place in 1891 and 1893 adopted the British line of action and sent the torpedo boat Umbria to China on 10 October 1894 "for the protection of the nationals" and to "demonstrate the national flag in those regions, rarely visited by national, mainly war, ships". Umbria's captain Alessandro Bertolini reported to the Maritime Minister that he had decided to send on shore 11 marines because he had the

⁵⁴ The problem became urgent when, between 28 August and 1 September 400 Italian marines arrived in Beijing, from the ships Vettor Pisani and Fieramosca. Ibid., pp. 86-87, 122.

⁵⁵ De Courten, *La marina mercantile*, pp. 259-265.

⁵⁶ Blanc on 7 April 1895 stated that it would be in Italy's best interest to back Japan since "Italy is enjoying special sympathies in Tokyo". See De Courten, Sarger, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente*, p. 18.

information that "the other powers had also disembarked military personnel with the same purpose, which was protect their legations". Rome, in its effort to establish a role in the colonial arena and participate in a possible partition of China, acted alongside and in a similar manner to the other powers regardless of the feebleness of its position.⁵⁷

Towards the end of the 19th century just 280 Italians were residing in China, 200 of which were missionaries. There were 9 Italian commercial firms operating in the country in contrast to the 402 British, 76 French and 70 American. These estimations by Lodovico Nocentini (1849-1910), a sinologist and for a brief amount of time consul in Shanghai, were accompanied by the following statement made in September 1895: "It is necessary that Italy affirms and stabilizes commercial interests to extract, along the other powers, the advantages that will be obtainable by the new agreements (Shimonoseki treaty, editor's note) because if it did not, it could not take part in the powers' common action and it would find itself almost excluded from a rich field for its commercial activity or it would participate but for the sake of others and not for itself". Francesco Gavotti, the new commander of Umbria, referring to the important traffic centre of Shanghai, argued in June 1895: "Besides we don't have in those regions permanent Italian residents, save from rare exceptions; there are Italian missionaries and nuns sufficiently numerous, but these invoke the French protection [...]". The lack of a robust Italian presence in China did not discourage Canton's consul general Eugenio Zanoni Volpicelli (1865-1936). In an 1898 memorandum, he admitted the British and German organizational and economic superiority but he also highlighted the future potential for the Italian industry: "Our few countrymen scattered along the coastline and especially in Shanghai, are employees, shopkeepers or spinning mill workers. The flow of imports and exports to and from Italy, is limited and is conducted by foreign intermediaries; therefore, it is not listed as Italian commerce in the customs authorities' statistics [...]. However, if one considers that China and Japan are the silk countries par excellence, which is one of our principal products, it is evident that the progress and even the agitation of these markets, should greatly concern us". Lamenting the absence of Italian postal services in front of international competition, he finally concluded: "The Italian flag here is unknown or close to that".⁵⁸

The Italian colonial Association of exportation (*Società coloniale italiana di esportazione*) and even some deputies, observing the "scramble for China", were criticizing the modest, cautious Italian stance. For the liberal Deputy Antonio Teso it was time for the Foreign Minister Visconti Venosta to carve out a more dynamic and aggressive policy, following the powers' paradigm. Allegations of delay notwithstanding, Venosta did indeed examine the possibility of increasing Italian prestige in China. On 23 April 1898, during a parliamentary debate, he revealed his agreement with the Maritime Minister, to dispatch warships in Chinese waters to

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 18-19.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 21-22, 25.

promote protection and "national dignity", especially "when other nations' flags are present". On 23 March the Naval Division for the Far East was assembled, containing: the cruiser Stromboli as flagship, and the ships Marco Polo, Elba, Piemonte, Etna, Carlo Alberto and Liguria. During the Boxer uprising the Naval Division was disbanded and superseded by the Naval Oceanic Force, formed by the cruisers Stromboli, Vesuvio, Vettor Pisani, Fieramosca. In January 1898, Venosta in his correspondence to Raggi, inquired about which place would be suitable for Italy to find an expanse "in correlation" with the powers' actions. The ambassador, conscious about Italy's lack of means, experience and of concrete interests⁵⁹ and witnessing from up close the intensity of the foreign economic-political rivalry responded that at the time an occupation would be inappropriate and unjustified.⁶⁰ He was subsequently dismissed. In any case Venosta, before his own replacement by Canevaro on 29 June 1898, dispatched the cruiser Marco Polo, under the command of captain Incoronato, to study the coastline for a suitable port. After surveying the coastline he indicated the bay of Nimrod (Sansie Kiang), 60 kilometres south of Ningbo, within the British sphere of influence. Rear admiral Camillo Candiani concurred with Incoronato and organized two "scientific-exploratory" marine expeditions in the interior to Zhejiang under the suspicious gaze of the Japanese, also interested in the location.⁶¹

In November 1898, Marco Polo's captain reported to the Maritime Minister that the location San Mun or Sanmen Bay, south of Nimrod was appearing to be the only "occupiable" space for "reasons of political nature" south of Beijing.⁶² San Mun

⁵⁹ Rosaria Quartararo insisted that late 19th century Italy was in no position to expand its authority overseas. Slow industrialization meant that Italy did not export manufactured products and capitals nor needed the importation of raw materials. Instead Italy, was the recipient of capitals and foreign products since domestic production was unable to satisfy the needs of its own expanding population. Moreover, at the time, few Italians were embarking in financial activities in China and a port or coal base was not necessary to Italian shipping since it still had not transitioned to steam ships. See Quartararo, "L'affare di San-Mun", pp. 468-475.

⁶⁰ Raggi in June 1900 replying to Venosta asserted: "We do not intent to enact neither a policy of expansion in China, nor an adventurist policy [...]. He also suggested to the government to stop its survey for a colony and concentrate its efforts to expand Italian financial interests since "if China can never become an outlet for our workers' immigration, it could be one for our mechanics, engineers and Italian businessmen and it could be a market for our products". Nocentini was arguing as early as December 1884: "Planting the Italian flag [...] in those Far East provinces could secure several industries of ours, already existent and flourishing, against any dangerous competition. On this matter we should not attribute any less importance than we do to the search for new outlets for our commerce, since our products are not yet very redundant to need urgently many ports [...] instead today it seems more necessary to guarantee against any development, the existence and prosperity of our industries, which can be the only source of safe and profitable commerce". De Courten, Sargeri, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente*, pp. 36-38.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 31, 36-45.

⁶² Raggi, mysteriously embracing the idea of an Italian colony, collected information and favourable foreign opinions about a possible Italian action in San Mun and reported on 22 November 1898 to De Martino: "[...] since the chosen bay does not communicate with any power except England, the royal government would not raise any objections to these plans and it (England, editor's note) could even welcome the idea of our occupation of the bay of San Mun if it was informed and given reassurances which I think (is something editor's note) Germany did as well at the moment of the Kiao-Ciao occupation". See Laura Rampazzo, *Un pizzico d'Italia nel cuore della Cina: la concessione di Tianjin*, Master's dissertation, University Ca' Foscari, (Venice, 2011), p. 18.

and the Zhejiang hinterland seemed fertile, rich in silk, rice, grain, densely populated with temperate climate and could function as coal replenishment base.⁶³ Foreign Minister Canevaro, through the Italian ambassador in London De Renzis, in December 1898 contacted his British counterpart Salisbury to ascertain London's standpoint in the event of an Italian action in China. Salisbury, ever friendly, welcomed the news and theoretically backed Rome's initiative providing that it would not, under any circumstances, cede San Mun later to another power or resort to the use of force for its acquisition; a scenario that would have intensified the partition of China. On 2 and 21 February 1899 he gave his consent, for the bay and for the southern part of the adjacent hinterland, provided that the Italian action would not harm the British interests in Zhejiang.⁶⁴ The Italian-British shady alliance in Africa was now revived in the Orient: British policy makers, since Rome could not pose any threat, appeared sympathetic to the Italian governments, which in exchange were acting as London's docile collaborators. In addition Rome was convinced that Britain, Germany and the U.S would not oppose a peaceful Italian penetration.⁶⁵ The Japanese, according to the national press would accept the Italian initiative as an act of kindness to London. In reality, Tōkyō preferred an Italian settlement there in comparison to a menacing military or naval base belonging to one of the superpowers.⁶⁶ Canevaro, encouraged and determined, ordered ambassador De Martino in late February to present to the Zongli Yamen an official note demanding, firstly the lease of San Mun with a view of establishing a naval base and secondly the recognition of the Zhejiang province as an exclusive Italian sphere of influence. The note was presented on 4 March 1899.⁶⁷ The Chinese authorities rejected the demand, by declining to respond and urged the Italian side to withdraw it on the basis of the "hitherto existing relations of friendship and trust between the two states". On 8 March the Italian Foreign Minister authorized De Martino to present an ultimatum that upon its expiry (four days) would lead to the capture of the location by Italian forces commanded by captain Incoronato, disembarking from the vessels Marco Polo and Elba. The attitude of the British ambassador in Rome was perplexing. On one hand he made clear that violence would not be tolerated; on the other he confided to Canevaro that the British ambassador in Beijing Claude Maxwell MacDonald (1852-

⁶³ Lodovico Nocentini, "Attraverso il Ce-Kiang", *Nuova Antologia di scienze, lettere ed arti*, n. 167 (October 1889), pp. 521- 523.

⁶⁴ Rampazzo, *Un pizzico d'Italia nel cuore della Cina*, pp. 19-20.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 21.

⁶⁶ Quartararo, "L'affare di San-Mun", pp. 480-492.

⁶⁷ Four days later, the Prince of Naples and future king Vittorio Emanuele III (1869-1947) writing to general Egidio Osio (1840-1902), claimed: "[...] I am very content that measures are taken to have a base for our Far East commerce, commerce that represents interests already substantially important and can only increase; any site in China will be a thousand times better than the entire of Ethiopia". See Paoletti, *La Marina Italiana in Estremo Oriente*, p. 27. On 19 July 1900, King Umberto visited Naples to greet the departing Italian troops en route to China, as he did in the past for the African expeditions. It would be his last time as he was assassinated 10 days later. See De Courten, Sarger, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente*, p. 251. The Italian expeditionary force in China was comprised by an infantry battalion, a rifleman (bersaglieri) battalion, a machine gun battery and an engineers' detachment, sustenance and sanitary squads, numbering 1882 soldiers and 82 officers. See Rampazzo, *Un pizzico d'Italia nel cuore della Cina*, pp. 29-30.

1915) was instructed to support the Italian actions in San Mun. After the first rejection, which was perceived in Rome as an offence Salisbury urged Beijing to satisfy the Italian demands. The British authorities in London and China however, were opposed to the submission of any ultimatums. So Canevaro issued the order for the ultimatum to be withdrawn; an order never received by De Martino who presented it only to be rejected once again. The incident was made known worldwide by the Reuters news agency and the German and the British ambassadors in Rome demanded explanations from Canevaro on 11 March. Although he denied the facts, in May 1899, he was dismissed amid severe taunts in the parliament. Despite the humiliation⁶⁸ and the international isolation, the negotiations were resumed but restricted just to the San Mun coast. In any case they yielded no tangible results. Canevaro was replaced by Venosta upon the cabinet reformation of May 1899 and De Martino by Raggi as the general ambassador in Beijing.⁶⁹ The new Foreign Minister made a final effort, enquiring about the possibility of an Italian settlement in Ningbo but failed all the same.⁷⁰ Another profound wound was opened, at a time when any other eminent nation obtained whatever it desired in China. In Italy the colonialists, ashamed and hungry for international recognition, felt that a great chance for Rome's affirmation as a Great Power was lost. Diametrically opposite was the anti-colonialists' reaction. According to them Italy in China had avoided the international complications and expenses or another Adwa.⁷¹ For the Chinese that sensed and profited from the Italian relative weakness, it was the first time they successfully stood up to European imperialism as did the Ethiopians *mutatis mutandis* three years earlier.

On 11 June 1898 the Chinese Emperor Guangxu (1871-1908), issued a series of progressive reforms, effecting the public education and military sectors, encouraging the establishment of railways and newspapers and liquidating corruption. These progressive reforms aimed at eradicating China's economic stagnation and military-organizational inferiority in front of the Western ominous challenge. However, these measures were to meet resistance. The emperor's aunt, the dowager Cixi (1835-1905), had been increasingly bringing together and representing the isolationists, the ultraconservative cycles of the court. On 22 September she overthrew the legitimate ruler and reversed his reforms, known as the "hundred days". The emperor was imprisoned and since his successor was underage, Cixi seized supreme authority. The dramatic events and the new government's xenophobe, anti-foreign stance emboldened, the secret societies in China, which were already

⁶⁸ The event caused such a despicable impression that its records were concealed even by the parliament. Prime Minister Giolitti admitted in his memoirs: "That whole affair, in fact, had no other result but a waste of several millions and a national humiliation; inadequately begun, it was afterwards abandoned in such an undignified manner that later, when the budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was discussed, I felt obliged to advise the Minister not to publish the relative documents for the sake of piety towards the fatherland; which the Minister accepted.". See Uros Urosevic, "Italian Liberal Imperialism in China: A Review of the State of the Field", in *History Compass*, n. 11/12 (2013), p. 1072.

⁶⁹ Paoletti, *La Marina Italiana in Estremo Oriente*, pp. 26-28.

⁷⁰ Rampazzo, *Un pizzico d'Italia nel cuore della Cina*, p. 25.

⁷¹ Quartararo, "L'affare di San-Mun", p. 493.

widespread. These popular organizations had been opposing and undermining the ruling Qing dynasty until the 1880s. Since their eradication was proved futile, the conservative Beijing Ministers and provincial governors approached and supported the destitute Chinese masses turning them against the foreigners, especially against the missionaries and the Christians, who were perceived to have brought on the country's degradation. Manipulated by the government for its own ends, the "Righteous and Harmonious Fists", known as Boxers in the West, modified their slogan "Down with the Qings and the foreigners" to "Protect the Qings and exterminate the foreigners".⁷²

The attacks on Chinese converts in May 1899 did not alert the foreign diplomatic missions. They only started realizing the grim situation after the assassination of a British protestant missionary on 31 December 1899. Initially demanding to the Zongli Yamen the banishment of the group, the consuls eventually called for their states' intervention, through a common naval demonstration. Rome, London, Berlin, Washington and Paris dispatched warships to Dagou, the closest port to Beijing whereas the French bishop Pierre Alphonse Favier (1837-1905) opted on 19 May for the disembarkation of fifty French soldiers to protect a Catholic cathedral. Ambassador Raggi on 9 March: "If the situation does not improve, it would be appropriate a demonstration, with the ships of the five interested powers". The tension in Beijing escalated and on 28 May 1900 the ambassadors jointly decided to request military and police forces from their governments while the British landed troops in Tianjin.⁷³ Between 30 May and 1 June the international fleet landed approximately 400 men in Dagou, among them 39 Italian marines and two officers under Captain Federico Paolini from the ship *Elba*. The clear-cut goal was to reach the Beijing legations that were undefended and isolated due to sabotage on the Tianjin-Beijing railway that had taken place on 5 June.⁷⁴ The expeditionary force reached and fortified the legations' district while on the same day 11 Italian marines under Commander Olivieri were entrusted with the protection of Beitang, Favier's cathedral. After the 7th of June, when the attacks on the Christian missions became more frequent, progressively more and more military contingents came ashore including 60 Italians. 40 were under the command of lieutenant commander Sirianni from the ship *Calabria* near Dagou and another 20 were led by Ermanno Carlotto in Tianjin.⁷⁵ On 17 June the joint naval forces, numbering 43 ships, attacked the Dagou forts, which had an important strategic value in view to future operations in the interior. The allied attack was successful; 24 Italian marines under the command of Giovanni Tanca participated.⁷⁶ The landing operations and the unprovoked assault on Dagou convinced

⁷² Paoletti, *La Marina Italiana in Estremo Oriente*, pp. 33-34.

⁷³ Panikkar, *Storia della dominazione Europea*, pp. 206-207.

⁷⁴ Sandro Bassetti, *Colonia Italiana in Cina*, (Milan, 2014), pp. 15-16.

⁷⁵ The church was besieged by the Boxers in mid-August and defended by a combination of Italian-French troops, Catholic priests and Chinese Christians. 6 Italians lost their lives during the fighting, see *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 21. The Italian detachment numbering almost 500 men, fought in the first line and played a vital role in capturing the forts alongside the British and Japanese forces. See Charles Cabry Dix, *The*

Empress Cixi to officially declare war on the powers on 21 June. From then on, the allies had to confront the well-organized Chinese army in addition to the ill-equipped irregulars.⁷⁷

On 10 June 1900 the British admiral Edward Hobart Seymour (1840-1929) decided to advance against the capital as quickly as possible, after MacDonald's pleads for further reinforcements since the Boxers were relentlessly assaulting the foreign quarters. Therefore, he assembled more than 2,000 soldiers (among them Carlotto's marines), departed from Tianjin and marched towards Beijing. The international force advanced very slowly, due to the fierce Boxer opposition and the sabotages of the Tianjin-Beijing railway. On the 18th combined Chinese regular and irregular troops defeated the multinational army in Langfang. Seymour, with 200 wounded, was forced to retreat and on the following day, pursued by a spirited and motivated enemy, he made camp in a Qing arsenal, where his forces were once again encircled and under heavy fire. In the meanwhile the situation of the citizens and of the military personnel in the legations was equally desperate. News of Seymour's defeat, famine and the ferocious Chinese assaults that had reduced the foreign legations into rubble, through mines, shelling and fire brought the besieged gradually on their knees.⁷⁸ The "Fu" wall that guarded a park which accommodated approximately 3,000 Chinese Christians, was within the joint Italian-Japanese defensive zone. It was not the first collaboration during the uprising between the two sides; it was though a unique occasion during which the two allies fought together in isolation for two days (13-15 July) under dramatic conditions against all odds. Besieged within the Fu wall, they were constantly driven back to the last defensive line.⁷⁹ That was where the two colonialisms, the colonialisms of the weak, the timid,

word's navies in the Boxer rebellion (China 1900), (London, 1905), p. 39. The Italian landing operation took place without the necessary military equipment. Luigi Barzini (1874-1947), correspondent of the newspaper *Il Secolo* caustically commended "One can no longer wonder about the disasters in Africa, when he sees how big is the ignorance and the negligence of our rulers. The War Minister's speech in response to the question posed to him by the parliament (...) is the most obvious proof of the complete ignorance in regard to the geographic and climatic conditions of the place in which his Excellency the Minister has sent us". On 10 July 1900, criticizing the apparent lack of supplies, maps, equipment and interpreters, the transportation difficulties and the diseases that spread in the cattle meant for the provision of the Italian troops, in contrast to the other nations' preparations, he added: "although we spent much, relatively to what Italy can spend, we don't have an army equipped for war". Despite his sharp tongue he was right. Tanca for the assault on Dagu asked the British and Germans for transportation means and for drinking water he resorted to the Russian benevolence. See De Courten, Sarger, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente*, pp. 137, 250-260. The Osservatore Romano's editor suggested that the scarcity of means and general unpreparedness would make a bad impression in China, where Italy went to "maintain friendly relations" with the Powers and to "spread its civilization", see "Ai Parenti", *L'Osservatore Romano*, num 161, Saturday-Sunday 14-15 July 1900, p. 1. Despite the economic and logistic difficulties Italy had to abide by its "commitments with consciousness of its duty", see "La Spedizione Italiana in viaggio", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 169, Tuesday-Wednesday 24-25 July 1900, p. 2.

⁷⁷ Harry Craufuird Thomson, *China and the Powers. A narrative of the outbreak of 1900*, (London-New York, 1902), pp. 23-26.

⁷⁸ Ambassador Raggi managed to inform Rome, that despite the Italian legation's destruction the personnel was alive and still fighting, see "La situazione in Cina", *L'Osservatore Romano*, n. 183. Thursday-Friday, 9-10 August 1900, pp. 1-2.

⁷⁹ Bassetti, *Colonia Italiana*, pp. 29-30.

the distressed, the aspirers' but also of the underachievers finally met. Japanese and Italian soldiers in a hostile land, champions of their respective states' prestige and successful modernization were risking their lives because that was exactly what the Great Powers had their soldiers do. Their governments instead of resolving internal problems, focused instead on keeping up appearances, as if securing economic privileges and political control at the expense of another poor, vulnerable, looked down on population would help them break free from their humiliating position of inequality and would offer them a prosperous future. Rome and Tōkyō, refusing to be further marginalized by the 19th century's champions, sought self-validation, respect and a role for their own distinct reasons while concealing their inherent weaknesses and insecurities. The self-affirmation and the initial "equality-complex" would be transformed, in the second quarter of the 20th century, into pompous, aggressive and reactionary totalitarian ideologies.

While the siege in Beijing was underway a similar siege of Tianjin's legations was taking place.⁸⁰ On 15 June the Boxers surrounded the foreign quarters and set the French sector on fire. Two days later Chinese imperial troops, numbering 15,000 men, joined them and started bombarding the city. The 2,400 marines and soldiers from Russia, Japan, Britain, Germany, the U.S., Austro-Hungary and Italy (Carlotto's forces remained eventually in the city whereas Sirianni joined the Seymour expedition), alongside 700 hundred foreign citizens and numerous Chinese in Tianjin drove back the daily assaults.⁸¹ On 20 June a mix of Russo-British forces, some 1,300 men, was set to leave Dagu to relieve the pressure on Tianjin. Commander Tanca, who had remained until then in the forts, left 10 marines under the midshipman Minisini to guard the flag waving there as a symbol of Italy's power and joined the expedition.⁸² On 23-24 June the allied army fighting its way forward, entered the city and relieved the siege. On the 26th the victorious forces left Tianjin, found the destitute Seymour force, still besieged at the arsenal (Tanca participated after discovering that 40 Italians under lieutenant Sirianni were also trapped), rescued and accompanied it to Tianjin's safety.⁸³

After Tianjin was captured the allied forces spent July wiping out all enemy resistance pockets. On 4 August the multinational army commenced marching towards Beijing. Numbering nearly 20,000 men, it defeated the Chinese forces on 5 and 6 August, covered 100 kilometres on foot and approached Beijing's ravaged legations a few days later. On 14 August the allied force was divided in two columns, the left consisting of the French, Italian, German and Russian troops and the right of the Japanese, American and British. The latter breached the city. The prestigious race for the first nation to relief the legations was won by the British. The 55 day siege was

⁸⁰ In 1860 Britain and France acquired concessions in Tianjin and in 1891 and 1898 Germany and Japan respectively. See De Courten, Sarger, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente* p. 197.

⁸¹ Dix, *The word's navies*, pp. 58-59.

⁸² Paoletti, *La Marina Italiana in Estremo Oriente*, pp. 50-51.

⁸³ Thomson, *China and the Powers*, pp. 43-50.

over. The Italian force under Sirianni, entered the Chinese capital three days later.⁸⁴ On the 28th an official occupation ceremony took place attended by every allied contingent. In reality, there was little to celebrate: 2,000 foreign soldiers, another 2,000 imperial troops along with innumerable Boxers, Chinese civilians and foreign missionaries and ordinary citizens were killed. Italy's losses are estimated at 36 soldiers and officers.⁸⁵ Despite the undeniable allied victory the peace treaty was signed after a year. In the meanwhile, the powers occupied Tianjin, Dagou, Beijing and other cities and initiated a series of punitive expeditions in the interior (in essence looting), with the pretext of restoring order and combating the still active Boxers.⁸⁶ Under the orders of the new (26 September) allied Commander in Chief Alfred Ludwig Heinrich Karl Graf von Waldersee (1832-1904) the allied forces (with Italian contingents), commencing from mid-September, attacked and devastated the villages that supposedly sheltered the barbarous insurgents.⁸⁷ Admiral Camillo Candiani (1841-1919) who participated in the transportation of the Italian troops in China, lamented the Italian inactivity and hesitation to partake in the marauding civilization mission. He was worried that Italy risked to be excluded from the partition that was to take place by not participating vigorously. Similarly, Colonel Vincenzo Garioni (1856-1929), upon hearing the news of another punitive campaign asserted: "On 9 November arrived the information that the Germans and the Austrians left for Kalgan for a new expedition. It was imperative for us to go with a somewhat strong contingent".⁸⁸

In February an armistice between the Allies and the Chinese was agreed and on 7 September 1901 the peace treaty was finally concluded. Each one of the 12 clauses, already discussed and agreed by the allies among themselves (April 1901), were humiliating and imposed an outright limitation of the Chinese sovereignty. Article 5 prohibited the import of weapons or of raw materials essential for weapon manufacturing. Another article imposed the foreign control of 12 points along the Chinese railways in the coast and in the interior. Furthermore, the Chinese government was obliged to allow the stay of foreign armed forces for the protection of the Beijing legations, in which Chinese entry was forbidden. It was also bound to demolish the fortifications in Dagou. According to the sixth article, China had to provide, as war reparations, 450 million tael (67 million pounds); until the indemnity's payment, the powers took charge of China's internal and maritime customs and of the salt tariff as guarantee. The annual 4% interest and China's resort to foreign lending

⁸⁴ Bassetti, *Colonia Italiana*, p. 24.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 15.

⁸⁶ For Lieutenant Masserotti the Russians were the more undisciplined while the Germans were the more ferocious upon the civilians. He noted that the Italian soldier in China was disciplined and humanitarian, uninterested to loot or wreck. The Japanese were the most well-behaved towards the local population: they set up hospitals, distributed rice, paid for what they needed, probably serving future political and commercial goals. De Courten, Sarger, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente* pp. 166-167.

⁸⁷ Paoletti, *La Marina Italiana in Estremo Oriente*, pp. 96-97.

⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 100-102.

resulted to an indemnity double the size of the original one and a huge public debt. The Italian government had anxiously instructed admiral Candiani to press the demoralized Chinese during the signing of the treaty, for the concession of San Mun. Other objectives were the exploitation of the coal deposits⁸⁹ and the construction of a San Mun-Beijing railway. After the Beijing peace treaty, Salvago Raggi, the Italian ambassador was in unison: "I think it would be necessary to determine in an honourable way the question regarding the port we have already requested in Zhejiang".⁹⁰ In the end, Italy was awarded with a consolation gift, 457,000 square metres for an indefinite period of time, in Tianjin, between the Austrian and the Russian concessions.⁹¹ Rome's gains were symbolic more than anything else. Firstly it obtained equal status with the other powers by acquiring the same extraterritorial privileges and the right to maintain a military force in the Legation Quarter in Beijing. Secondly, it now had official authorization to use the international quarters in Shanghai and Xiamen. Finally, Rome secured the right to protect mines, churches and railways by force if necessary.⁹²

The Chinese expedition's expenses for the fiscal year 1900-1901 had exceeded 8 million lire; the following year's accounted for an extra 5 million, which had not been foreseen by the War and the Maritime Ministries. As war reparations, Rome received between 77 and 99 million lire (depending from the source), the 5.9% of the total indemnity, and the right to handle a part of the abandoned salt pits situated between Dagu and Beijing.⁹³ After the end of the operations, the main body of the troops were to repatriate between 29 and 30 July 1901; The only troops that remained in China had garrison duties: 400 in the Beijing legation, 400 in Tianjin and 300 to guard the railway passing through the Hwang-Tsun area. During a parliamentary discussion in February 1904 Deputy Dal Verme suggested the withdrawal of the majority of the armed forces from China for economic reasons but the retention of a limited naval force for international and stature purposes. The socialist Deputy De Andreis responded: "I will not even take part in the discussion of whether the marines are as capable as the land troops or if they are more or less expensive in these far away expeditions [...]; but in reality what did we obtain? Are we perhaps taller in international politics? Have we perhaps given independence to China? After falling under the control of a German general, we can really affirm that in China we only protect the regions where our forces are located and not a span further [...]. So every penny spent is futile in regard to civilization and peace; and we have to keep staying

⁸⁹ The War Ministry assigned to the Italian troops the bizarre task of expediting the creation of a coal mine exploitation company situated in Shanghai. See De Courten, Sargeri, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente*, p. 336.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 105.

⁹¹ Paoletti, *La Marina Italiana in Estremo Oriente*, pp. 104-105.

⁹² Maurizio Marinelli, "Self-portrait in a Convex Mirror: Colonial Italy Reflects on Tianjin", *Journal of Global Cultural Studies*, n. 3 (2007), p. 125.

⁹³ Paoletti, *La Marina Italiana in Estremo Oriente*, pp. 335-336.

there to maintain solidarity with the other powers that want to retain a foothold in China".⁹⁴

The concession was a part of the Beijing peace treaty and was concluded de jure on 7 June 1902 with the "Agreement with China for the Italian concession in Tianjin".⁹⁵ Nevertheless, lieutenant commander Mario Valli had already occupied the location on 22 January 1901 to secure its future possession by a *fait accompli*. Raggi, witnessing the Russians and Belgians establishing themselves in the area of the Hai river, sent a telegram to Foreign Minister on 19 January 1901, asking for Rome's authorization to proceed to the provisional occupation of "the best of what remained". The Italian Minister in Beijing asserted: "[...] the provisional occupation of these terrains would serve to prevent the others from seizing them". Unsurprisingly, Venosta gave his consent and Valli captured the area and delimited it with markers, an action that irritated the Chinese and the neighbouring Russians alike.⁹⁶ As early as 27 April 1901, Raggi was authorized by the new Foreign Minister Prinetti to commence negotiations with the Chinese plenipotentiaries in order to obtain a concession in Tianjin in exchange for the definitive renunciation of the Italian aspirations in San Mun and Zheijang.⁹⁷ On 12 March 1902 the two sides agreed on the following terms: The land and the property of the agreed territory, including the salt quays, were passing to the Italian government;⁹⁸ the latter had to resolve any territorial differences with the owners of the adjacent railway line. The Chinese residing in the villages were to remain landlords of their property, but the Italian government retained the right to expropriate it for public utility and sanitary reasons for a price 10% lower of what was regulated for the Japanese concession. The Chinese residents, in contrast to other "foreigners", were free to sell or acquire property within the Italian zone. Every other issue would be regulated "in the same way as established for the concessions obtained by the other foreign powers"; Italy was finally recognized as an equal in China.⁹⁹ On 7 June the Italian embassy's secretary and later on ambassador in China, Giovanni Gallina (1852-1936), Raggi's successor, and the inspector of Tianjin's maritime customs signed the agreement. Indeed "to encourage Italy's commercial growth in northern China, the Chinese government ceded indefinitely to Italy an area left of the river Hai, upon which the Italian government had the right to exercise total and full jurisdiction in the same manner that had been agreed for the concessions obtained by other nations". The

⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 153-157, 353-354.

⁹⁵ Maurizio Marinelli, "The genesis of the Italian concession in Tianjin: a combination of wishful thinking and realpolitik", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, n. 15/4 (2010), p. 537.

⁹⁶ The Russian consul N. Poppe was the only "ally" to "energetically protest against this action" since Valli had included a part of the Russian concession in the Italian zone. Valli corrected and dispatched a second delimitation on 5 February to the allied consuls in a cooperative, inter-colonial solidary manner. See Ibid., pp. 542-544.

⁹⁷Rampazzo, *Un pizzico d'Italia nel cuore della Cina*, pp. 35-37.

⁹⁸ The Italian side had to pay a small fee to the Qing government for the use of Tianjin, see Cesare Cesari, *La Concessione Italiana di Tien-Tsin*, (Rome, 1937), p. 15.

⁹⁹Marinelli, "The genesis of the Italian concession". p. 538.

juridical status of the Tianjin concession, arranged by the 1902 Italian-Chinese agreement, was bewildering in every respect. Beijing preserved its sovereignty upon the territory but recognized to Rome the right to administer it and to confiscate and obtain, nominally vacated land. Non Italian nationals could acquire terrains exclusively through the Italian authorities'. Thus, in this regard, Italy acted as Beijing's proxy by possessing "full jurisdiction". It was a rare instance of one state ceding sovereignty and another acquiring it. Since the concession did not entail any variation to the level of Italy's political control or borders Tianjin is not considered an Italian colony by many scholars.¹⁰⁰ As already examined, a settlement was concluded with the leasing of a territory, which remained under China's nominal ownership, to foreigners. The contract usually had a duration of 99 years. Concessions were a particular kind of settlement. They were terrains ceded in perpetuity to the foreign governments that placed them to their citizens' disposal attributing a predefined land tax to the Chinese government. In their turn the foreign nationals, always under the extraterritoriality status, regulated the concession's fiscal, financial and municipal administration while imposing public order as well. The Italian establishment in Tianjin was a concession in every manner. Furthermore, the 'full jurisdiction' clause gave Rome the special right to purchase estates and not just lease them, as was the common practise in these cases.

The concessions were typically administered by the respective nations' consuls or local committees that were elected by the foreign citizens of the quarters. In theory, the June 1902 protocol entrusted the administration to the Consul General as a representative of the Italian government.¹⁰¹ Before the treaty and even afterwards, as the consular executive authority was unprepared, Italian Tianjin, much like Eritrea and Somalia, was directed by servicemen; in this case by the lieutenant Domenico Guido Biancheri under the supervision of the Foreign Ministry.¹⁰² The Italian consuls and observers demonstrated an interest for the British "township" model of administration. The British concessions were managed by a council, whose president exercised powers similar to a town's Mayor. The French method was deemed as more "centralized".¹⁰³ In 1905 the Foreign Ministry approved the British municipal-neighbourhood model. In the meanwhile (1903-1905) Tianjin was administered in a provisional manner, by an appointed delegate, a royal commissary. The subsequent "Building regulations" promoted western modernity in urban architecture, landscaping safety and hygiene. The consul had the power to demolish any building and drive away any Chinese inhabitant if this course of action would contribute to Tianjin's moral and technical advancement. Everything that was Chinese was downgraded and put aside whereas European superiority was vividly exalted.¹⁰⁴ However, the lives and property of the Chinese inhabitants of the town living on the

¹⁰⁰ De Courten, Sarger, *Le Regie truppe in Estremo Oriente*, pp. 92-93.

¹⁰¹ Marinelli, "Self-portrait in a Convex Mirror", p. 123.

¹⁰² Rampazzo, *Un pizzico d'Italia nel cuore della Cina*, pp. 42-43.

¹⁰³ Marinelli, "The genesis of the Italian concession", p. 551.

¹⁰⁴ Marinelli, "Self-portrait in a Convex Mirror", p. 133.

Italian-Chinese territory were supposedly guaranteed by the 1902 protocol. The foreign administrations were bound to respect and exercise the imperial estate legislation. From a juridical point of view Chinese and foreigners alike were appertained to the township's and municipal police's jurisdiction; violations of the penal code in Tianjin the Chinese offender was to be extradited to Qing authorities and the Italian to the consul or mayor-chairman of the quarter.¹⁰⁵

Italy gained some international recognition but certainly not enough. Its concession, among the 9 foreign ones in Tianjin, was the second smallest after Belgium's and probably the more destitute one, from a sanitary and financial point of view. The Chinese city numbered just 200 shops and almost 900 houses; the 13,074, after the 1902 census, residents were mainly salt pit workers. The Italian vice counsel there, Cesare Poma (1862-1932), nominated in April 1901 but commencing his duties in August, lamented the poor choice of the location. On 19 November 1901 he reported to Camillo Romano Avezzana (1867-1949), the new ambassador, that Italy had made a "miserable acquisition"; he regarded the territory as a composition of a Chinese village, a cemetery and an unsanitary pond and he deemed the local population too impoverished to be able to contribute any taxes and the district's rearrangement and expropriation, in order to accommodate Italian citizens, burdensome. He addressed reports also to Raggi, highlighting discouragingly the difficulties. Foreign Minister Prinetti ordered Avezzana to dismiss the vexatious Poma on 18 November. In January 1901 lieutenant commander Valli claimed: "There the only Italian thing that exists is the barracks where our guard troops reside; the rest is an obstacle of swamps and Chinese graves [...]. It seems that the Italian concession of Tianjin is there just to satisfy modest nominal ambitions and makes (us) wonder with melancholy that it is maybe a good thing that the San Mun affair failed". Vice admiral Carlo Mirabello (1847-1910) visiting Tianjin in 1903 as the Royal Navy's inspector noted the activity in the nearby Russian, Austrian and Japanese settlements in comparison to the abandonment in the Italian sector. The only Italian firm operating within the concession was the "Italian Colonial Trading Company". The greatest advantage of the concession, as lieutenant Biancheri underlined in 1902 was its proximity to the Mukden-Beijing railway, an advantage that could boost production and commercial transactions with the interior. Minister Gallina after a survey telegraphed to Prinetti on 12 April 1902: "I have visited our settlement there and I am convinced that if its situation is handled with intelligence, it could present in the future real advantages either for our general position or for the interests of Italian individuals that will come here to trade". The scarce number of Italian citizens and the meagre financial interests urged some to propose the concession's abandonment or relocation to a more commercially active Chinese region. Rome selected to maintain it as part of its tedious, self-deceptive policy aiming to achieve equality.¹⁰⁶ The debate

¹⁰⁵ Enrico Catellani, "Organizzazione e funzionamento del settlement italiano in Tientsin", *Istituto coloniale italiano, Atti del secondo congresso degli italiani all'estero, relazioni e comunicazioni*, vol. 1 part 1, Conference, (Rome, 11-20 June 1911), pp. 121-123.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 121.

over Tianjin is highly reminiscent of the 1870-1880 intense deliberations over Assab.¹⁰⁷

No commercial association and private company appeared disposed to invest in Tianjin except one. In January 1901 a group of Italian capitalists presented to Raggi a somewhat vague developmental proposal for the transformation of the Tianjin area to a "centre of considerable importance". Raggi, elated by this example of Italian entrepreneurship, presented the plan to Venosta. In March the same businessmen addressed an official note to Raggi with the intention of developing "the whole area if the land had been granted to them free of charge". The investment group would undertake the infrastructural projects and requested to administrate the region autonomously, without the army's and the state's intervention, in line with the British and American examples. However, Raggi appeared reluctant to make any commitments when the establishment of a consular office and the official transfer of Tianjin were still underway.¹⁰⁸ The government, having to secure funds for infrastructure works such as roads, the swamps' drainage, and the urgent relocation of the cemetery, resorted to low-price land auctions with the hope of attracting funds.¹⁰⁹ Light taxation was also imperative in order to cope with the road maintenance fees and the initial infrastructural costs. Full Italian jurisdiction, granted by the 1902 agreement, deprived the Qing government of the right of taxation which was passed to the Italian authorities. On 27 December 1901 Prinetti authorized Avezzana to award the demanding reorganization of the concession to a private Italian company. The company for the development of Tianjin would undertake the expropriation of the necessary areas, the removal of the cemetery, the construction of a 7 kilometre road network and the flattening of the ground. For its services, it would receive a portion of the land.¹¹⁰ The government would remain responsible for the implementation of the 1902 protocol until the signing of the sub concession between the future developers and the authorities. No firm demonstrated the smallest interest. The area was abandoned for almost 10 years, like Assab. Accordingly in 1908 the newspaper *La Tribuna* reported: "In Tianjin the Italian trade is zero, the only Italian firms are a barber shop and the company Marzoli, property of a brick factory".¹¹¹ In June 1909 Tianjin's administration was almost bankrupt and Minister Tommaso Tittoni (1855-1931) suggested the state's intervention for "prestige" and "dignity" reasons in the Far East. Between 1902 and 1908 some improvements were accomplished: elementary hygiene organization, expropriation of land and houses and ground levelling thanks to the "scanty savings of the concession's balance". Further

¹⁰⁷Rampazzo, *Un pizzico d'Italia nel cuore della Cina*, pp. 45-49, 55-56.

¹⁰⁸Marinelli, "The genesis of the Italian concession", pp. 544-545.

¹⁰⁹Four auction procedures had taken place until 1908 with no success, see Aglaia De Angeli, "Italian land auctions in Tianjin: Italian colonialism in early twentieth-century China", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, n. 15/4 (2010), pp. 558-559.

¹¹⁰A part of the land was to be available to the Italian government to erect the consulate and other public utility structures. The consul aided by a committee of Tianjin's landlords would direct the administration and public services. See, Marinelli, "The genesis of the Italian concession", p. 13.

¹¹¹Rampazzo, *Un pizzico d'Italia nel cuore della Cina*, pp. 57-59.

construction projects such as a hospital, a dispensary, a school of arts and crafts were funded by a 400,000 lire loan.¹¹² Italy was substantially more experienced and cautious in China, after the African debacle, and acted in unison with the Great Powers' interests and more specifically with the British, a policy that eventually yielded some results. Tianjin bestowed Italy with prestige, recognition, and equality at least theoretically. Italy seemed to finally obtain an international role and an audible voice in the conferences and conventions that would shape future policies. Psychologically, the haunting Adwa shadow was cast away slightly in China, substantially in Libya in 1911 and completely in Ethiopia in 1936; its unsettling, self-doubting uneasiness made a comeback in 1943. From a material point of view, the inability of the late 19th century Italian industrial production to cope with the international antagonism and the urgency to invest whatever surpluses were available amidst economic crises and the absence of a "capitalistic" consciousness, especially in southern Italy's stagnate interior, made investments and grandiose imperialistic adventures abroad strenuous. Tianjin's development, mirroring the entire early Italian colonial phenomenon, faced many financial problems in the first years when it came close to being abandoned. Since it was unable to render itself profitable, as Eritrea and Somalia in the past, the government was compelled to provide the funds for its sustenance; an impractical and, even worse, burdensome operation that was to act as a display of Italy's modernization and splendour in order to keep up appearances with the rest of the world. Interestingly enough, it would be the allied, fellow latecomers Japanese that would expel the Italians from Asia. Forged by identical distressing experiences and having risen together in the New Imperialism epoch as students of the European expansionism doctrines, they would occupy Tianjin in 1943.¹¹³

¹¹² De Angeli, "Italian land auctions in Tianjin", pp. 566-567.

¹¹³ Guido Samarani, "An historical turning point: Italy's relations with China before and after 8 September 1943", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, n. 15/4 (2010), p. 592.

Part 2 Early Japanese Colonialism

8. Japan's domestic and international situation after the Restoration

This chapter will shed some light on modern Japan's economic, political and social conditions. Japan in the 1850s was a relatively backward country. Political power was firmly in the hands of the Sei Tai Shogun, the "barbarian-subduing generalissimo". The seat of his power was in the capital Edo, from which he guaranteed protection from foreign dangers and preserved internal order. For a period of more than 200 years (1600-1868) this task belonged to the Tokugawa family, which established the shogunate (bakufu) system; a feudal military dictatorship comparable to the European lord/vassal relationship of the Middle Ages.¹ The Tokugawa controlled directly and indirectly 1/4 of the total land mass of the Japanese islands in the 18th century while the reception of foreign envoys, mostly from Korea, served to reinforce their legitimacy both within the country and internationally.² They ruled in the name of the "Heavenly Sovereign", the Emperor, and were traditionally and ceremonially appointed by him and maintained their authority through strict military control and a sophisticated system of agents and inspectors, watchful for any signs of unrest.³ The Emperors were secluded in the ancient capital of Kyōto where they had no political say. They were stripped of any kind of influence in the domestic administration and served as religious symbols of the continuity with the past and as guardians of the nation's ancient values.⁴ Japan much like the other states of the Far East were in the orbit of Chinese superior political, economic and cultural influence and was expected, starting from 57 A.D., to annually dispatch tributes to China. These tokens of submission served as acknowledgment of the Celestial Empire's undisputed politico-cultural preponderance. During the Tokugawa period, the imperial household and court had conceded, willingly or not, their political power to the supreme military commander, and withdrew to the background of political developments. The Tokugawas expected loyalty from their vassal lords and loyalty was not conceived as devotion to the Emperor. The role of the Emperor was open to interpretations and depended on the views and interests of the two groups that would be opposed until the final showdown in 1868: the imperial loyalists and the shogunate's supporters.⁵ The regime's advocates were claiming that the Shogun, having brought order after chaos had every right to rule. Others like the shogunal regent Matsudaira Sadanobu (1759-

¹ Bernard Moses, "The Economic Situation in Japan" in *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Mar., 1898), p.168.

² Mark Ravina, "State-Building and Political Economy in Early-modern Japan", in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (Nov., 1995), pp. 1000-1001.

³ John E. Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers, Japanese Journeys to America and Hawaii 1850-80*, (Chicago, 2000), p. 5.

⁴ Herschel Webb, *The Japanese Imperial Institution in the Tokugawa Period*, (New York, London, 1968), p. 223.

⁵ David Magarey Earl, *Emperor and Nation in Japan, Political Thinkers of the Tokugawa Period*, (Seattle, 1964), pp. 9-12.

1829) regarded the Shogun as subject to imperial authority, an "Imperial servant" in 1788.⁶ At any rate, until 1868, the Shoguns legitimated their authoritarian rule by obtaining or extracting the imperial consent to administrate the land and ruled more or less in their name.

The approximately 250 fiefs (han) were ruled by Daimyo (feudal lords) who owed their allegiance to the Edo government and governed their lands in a rather autonomous way. Despite their bond of vassalage to the Shogun, these lords maintained independent standing armies, imposed their rules and controlled their owned borders. Their administrative capital was each dominion's castle town, protected by armies of feudal retainers (samurai). The samurai also manned the central bureaucracy in the castle town and they served as district magistrates in the outskirts, collecting taxes, administering justice and maintaining public order as the lord's representatives. Cooperative self-government, subordination of personal goals to community's greater good, confidence in the central administration, and a strong sense of hierarchical lineage made this system successful.⁷ Above all else its success relied on the obedience of the peasants. Slow urbanization, the absence of state monopolies and the lack of pressures exerted by foreign markets guaranteed the functionality of the local administration until the abrupt disruption of traditional values that took place in the mid-19th century.

Between 1633 and 1639 the shogunate promulgated a series of decrees that brought about the national seclusion of the country.⁸ Years of bad harvests in the 1800s reduced tax revenues, and signified the government's inability to rely on tax contributions.⁹ A great number of samurai and feudal lords ended up in debt to the money lending merchants. The shogunate's inflexibility and centuries of failed, unproductive policies frustrated the merchants and the peasants who demanded lower prices and efficient governance. The discontent grew into anti-government riots in the 1860s when 35 urban and 106 countryside incidents took place.¹⁰

⁶ Ravina, "State-Building ", p. 1002. The Tokugawa family utilized Confucianism, Buddhism and the traditions of warrior rule in order to safeguard their claim to govern. See Ibid., p. 1003.

⁷ Thomas Smith, *The Agrarian Origins of Modern Japan*, (Stanford, 1959), pp. 202-203.

⁸ Unrestricted trade relations with the Portuguese and the Spanish led to missionary activities and proselytism of great masses in the southern island of Kyūshū. Christianity was a direct challenge to Japan's social order, the pattern of equality before god a threat to the well-defined hierarchy. Furthermore, it could lead to a foreign invasion. In 1597 22 Christians, among them 6 Europeans were executed and in 1635 a Bakufu edict forbade journeys overseas and closed the country. See Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers*, pp. 9-11.

⁹ The population started increasing substantially after the 1840s. Before that and for approximately 150 years it remained rather static. High mortality rate and infanticide stunned any growth tendency. See Kazushi Ohkawa, "Capital formation in Japan", in *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe. VII. The Industrial Economies: Capital, Labour and Enterprise, Part 2 The United States, Japan and Russia*, ed. P. Mathias and M. M. Postan, (London, 1978). p. 137.

¹⁰ Patricia Sippel, "Popular Protest in Early Modern Japan: The Bushū Outburst" in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (Dec., 1977), p. 275.

The peasants, through their labour provided for the sustenance of the entire population and developed into the backbone of the feudal society. Japan was prominently an agrarian country; the peasants amounted to 80% of the total population and they had to contribute nearly 40% of their crops' yield in taxes.¹¹ The agricultural population remained stable from the 1850s to the 1940s, a fact that manifests the continuing importance of the agricultural sector into the modern era.¹² During the first decades of the 19th century, peasants cultivated less than a hectare of land each and many of them were struggling to survive. According to the law, peasants had no right to move and were tied to the land as labour force. If someone desired to cross his domain's borders he had to obtain a special permission.¹³ Production techniques varied geographically, but they can be safely assessed as underdeveloped in western terms: agricultural methods were traditional and production below the potential levels even in terms of existing methods. Only a small percentage of the country's land was intensely cultivated.¹⁴ Chemical fertilizers were nonexistent, the equipment primitive, and capital accumulation an unknown notion. Scientific practices such as seed selection and double-cropping were not widespread until the end of the 19th century. Lack of interaction with the world, as a result of the seclusion policies, certainly contributed to a relative economic backwardness. On the other hand, it helped in forging a self-sufficient domestic market and more importantly averted the possibility of a foreign invasion.¹⁵

In the 1850's this seclusion was seriously challenged from abroad. Through the annual reports of the Dutch, the Japanese were informed on the rising politico-

¹¹ W. G. Beasley, "Feudal Revenue in Japan at the Time of the Meiji Restoration" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (May, 1960), p. 263.

¹² Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers*, pp. 6-7.

¹³ Moses, "The Economic Situation", p. 170. The same author made a compelling remark concerning the similarity of Italy and Japan: "Lack of resources is the most important barrier to Japan's ambition to move at once into the society of the Great Powers; and one cannot contemplate this phase of her striving without being reminded of the sorry fate of Italy in attempting to carry out a similar purpose. After the achievement of political unity, Italy might have held a very dignified position as a third-rate power. She might have continued to enjoy her hereditary prestige in art, and to take pride in her early intellectual leadership. The world would not have demanded much of her, and she might have devoted her energies to the development of her internal administration and economic resources. But in an evil hour she determined to be a great military and naval state, and as a result of her ambition she has been for years on the verge of bankruptcy. It may not be wise to prophesy that Japan, moved by the ambition to be a Great Power, has entered upon a career which leads to a similar end. At the same time, it is impossible to avoid observing here a certain parallel. Both nations have won distinction for their artistic creations. Each has a small territory and a large population, which has necessitated careful and intense cultivation, and left little opportunity in the present for agricultural growth. In both nations the genius of the people is artistic. The Japanese and the Italians stand in sharp contrast with the mechanical English and Americans, and by reason of their lack of mechanical talent suffer an obvious disadvantage in the rivalries of this industrial age". See *Ibid.*, pp. 184-185.

¹⁴ The arable area during the Tokugawa era certainly did not exceed 13 per cent of the whole country and for much of the period it was probably closer to 8 per cent. See John E. Orchard, "The Pressure of Population in Japan" in *Geographical Review*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Jul., 1928), p. 380.

¹⁵ Ohkawa, *Capital formation in Japan*, p. 139.

economical pressure they Europeans were exerting in East Asia and China in particular. Apart from these reports, to this fact attested the increasing frequency with which Western vessels sought trade, diplomatic relations or a safe haven to the Japanese shores. The first threat was the Russian settlements that appeared north of the Japanese island of Hokkaidō, in the Sakhalin and Kurile islands. Two Russian diplomatic missions in 1793 and 1804 were rebuffed but also verified the Russian interest in the North Pacific islands. Confrontation and sporadic skirmishes between Japanese and Russian settlers of the islands led to the apprehension of a Russian scouting party in 1811. Three years later a wandering party that had landed at the island of Kunashiri, was captured by Japanese officials but escaped after a short clash.¹⁶ The Bakufu strove to counter any foreign attempt in Hokkaidō (then known as Ezo) and consolidate its rights, detect future foreign activities and avert the danger exercised even firmer control. The first encounter with the British in the 19th century took place in 1808 when a frigate arrived at Nagasaki and demanded supplies in a remarkably coarse manner. In 1837 a joint American-British mission attempted to dock at Uruga, in Edo Bay, under the guise of returning home some Japanese castaways, although their overtures were rebuffed. Two diplomatic attempts by a British missionary in 1849 and by Hong Kong's colonial treasurer Robert Montgomery Martin (1801-1868) in 1853 failed all the same. Sporadically American and British whaling crews, seeking supplies and anchorage clashed with Japanese villagers like in 1824 in Mito. Fears of British territorial designs on Japan took a more tangible form when British vessels began to appear at the home waters due to the Opium War (1839-1842) with China.¹⁷ The humiliation of the great continental empire, the acquisition of a permanent naval base in the Orient (Hong Kong) and the rumours that Paris or London were interested in seizing the Ryūkyū islands south of the Japanese island of Kyūshū in 1843 alarmed Edo. The scholar Aizawa Seishisai (1781-1863) grasping how western imperialism worked, warned in 1825 his fellow countrymen: "When those barbarians plan to subdue a country not their own,

¹⁶ James Main Dixon, "Russia and Japan", in *Annual Publication of the Historical Society of Southern California*, vol. 10, No 3 (1917), pp. 13-16.

¹⁷ Some Japanese intellectuals of the time were convinced that the West was set to conquer both China and Japan and expressed their views in favour of an alliance against the common enemy. When mistrust of the West was rising many were proposing a Sino-Japanese co-operation. Later when westernization generated self-confidence the Japanese leaders forgot the notion that western powers were committing aggression and sought to collaborate with them instead. See Junji Banno, "Japan's foreign policy and attitudes to the outside world, 1868-1945: in *Japan and Australia. Two societies and their interaction*, ed. P. Drysdale, H. Kitaoji, (Hong Kong 1981), pp. 15-16. The Japanese public learned about the developments of the Opium war mainly from one source, the author Mineta Fūkō (1817-1883) who somehow distorted the actual flow of events. In short, he suggested that the Chinese fought valiantly and were winning the war against the ruthless drug dealers of the West. Chinese defeat was not attributed to the outdated eastern methods and obsolete equipment but to the lack of discipline, low morale and treachery. The story thus had a didactic and in a sense, self-congratulatory meaning: Japan should avoid the Chinese errors that led to its weakness and decadence. Discipline, moral perfection and an unyielding vigorous policy against the foreigners would guarantee Japan's survival. See Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, "Opium, Expulsion, Sovereignty. China's Lessons for Bakumatsu Japan", in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (Spring, 1992) pp. 15-17.

they start by opening commerce and watch for a sign of weakness. If an opportunity is presented, they will preach their alien religion to captivate the people's hearts".¹⁸ Aizawa urged military preparedness and a policy of "expelling the barbarian". He poignantly added: "The barbarian dogs and goats would trample us underfoot, and nothing could save us". Yoshida Shōin (1830-1859), an influential thinker among the loyalists, emphasized the danger coming from Britain whose pirates will not stop "until Ryūkyū is reached and Nagasaki is attacked".¹⁹ He was also aware and highly critical of the American peril.²⁰ Scholar Watanabe Kazan (1793-1841) was particularly worried about the Russian and British projects in the Far East and admitted in 1839 that "One European warship would suffice to annihilate a large Japanese army".²¹ At the same time Tokugawa Nariaki (1800-1860), Daimyo of the Mito domain believed that "Russia most probably will decide to invade Japan first and then go about conquering China".²² The foreign military threat and the sense of intimidation that it brought contributed to the formation of a common national identity after centuries of political fragmentation. In 1844 King Willem II of the Netherlands (Willem Frederik George Lodewijk 1792-1849) sent a letter to the shogunate authorities suggesting the voluntary opening of the country before the decision was imposed to them, since prolongation of the seclusion policy under the new circumstances was impossible. In 1845 the British admiralty had already approved

¹⁸ William Gerald Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, (Stanford, 1972), pp. 77-78. For the Confucian scholars in Korea, China and Japan, the Celestial Empire and the countries that had accepted its superior civilization constituted the civilised world. In Japan in particular, the belief that the country and its inhabitants were of divine origin was epitomized and in line with the ancient native Shintō religion. Ibid., pp. 74-75.

¹⁹ William Gerald Beasley, *Great Britain and the Opening of Japan 1834-1858*, (London, 1951), pp. 36-37.

²⁰ Shōin asserted that "English barbarians are not the only ones selling opium. Americans are too, and not to a small extent". And again "You Americans will not burn the opium yourselves while it is on your ships; you will let us burn it after unloading it in Japanese ports, thus creating an excuse for war. Moreover, you want free trade at ports throughout our land; but under such 'free' trade, smuggling would be impossible to stop. Stipulate as many prohibitions as you wish in the treaty. How will that prevent the spread of opium?" Talking about the US: "When you annexed New Mexico (1845), wasn't that by force of arms?". America had never acquired colonies in the Far East because it lacked the power to do so, not because it lacked the will; it would behave just like any other power given the chance. "You try to pass off your weakness as virtue. How detestable". He identified China's humiliation in the hands of the West with the lack of patriotic sentiment and ineffective administration. Spending money on armaments was of secondary importance. The Bakufu and Daimyo had to exercise strong and responsible leadership in order to confront the hated Russians and Americans. See Wakabayashi, "Opium, Expulsion, Sovereignty", pp. 19-25.

²¹ Watanabe also commented: "Today among the five great continents, America, Africa and Australia are already colonized by the Europeans... I cannot help but fear for Japan...our country is like meat thrown onto the road. How could they, like hungry tigers or thirsty wolves, not seize food thrown before them?". See Richard Albert Bradshaw, *Japan and European colonialism in Africa, 1800-1937*, Doctoral Dissertation, Ohio University, 1992, p. 90.

²² Wakabayashi, "Opium, Expulsion, Sovereignty", p. 3.

suggestions for the forced opening of Japan to western trade to take place when a sufficient naval force could be mustered.²³

There was a variety of ideas on how Japan should best meet the Western threat. The threat of political and economic subjugation could be countered, according to some scholars, by vigorous reforms mainly in the administration and military sectors based on the adoption of western scientific patterns.²⁴ In 1791 the military scholar Hayashi Shihei (1738-1793) recommended a series of military reforms based on western methods in view of protecting northern Japan from an eventual Russian offensive. The political economist Honda Toshiaki (1744-1821) went a step further. He envisaged the improvement of Japan's naval and merchant fleet as a way to deflect the foreigners. He suggested the capture of the Aleutian Islands and of North American territories as they could be used both for the installation of surveillance-defensive posts and as source of raw materials. He also proposed the transfer of the capital to Kamchatka as the future centre of a Japanese Pacific Empire. Yoshida Tōyō (1816-1862), a samurai from the Tosa domain, in 1861 suggested the establishment of a western style navy and of overseas colonies. The student of western science and practices Satō Nabuhiro (1769-1850) in his 1832 book, called for the occupation of the entire Asiatic continent: "With proper spirit and discipline on our part, China would crumble and fail like a house of sand within 5 to 7 years". Subsequently, Burma, India, Central Asia would surrender. Additionally, the Ryūkyū Islands could offer a base for an offensive to the Philippines and from there the capture of the Dutch East Indies and of the Southeast Asia could be accomplished. The Empire would be ruled by a military totalitarian government based on various bureaus that would administer every aspect of the subjects' social and economic activities.²⁵ To which extent Satō's ideas influenced future Japanese leaders remains dubious. It is astonishing, however, that this kind of reasoning was developed in the early 19th century when the ominous international state of affairs and its relative backwardness marginalised Japan in the backside of modern "civilised" word. In all probability, these views became popular, through pamphlets and books as a reassuring confirmation of Japan's survival, as a reactive psychological response to the foreign threat that jeopardized national security so bluntly. The author Shionaya Tōin in 1846 predicted that Britain would soon turn its gaze from China to Japan. Through demands for provisions and raids along the coastline London would eventually

²³ In April 1840 the British Minister John Copling wrote to Lord Palmerston (Henry John Temple, 1784-1865) to propose the utilization of the British forces gathered in China to punish the Japanese authorities for their lack of cooperation. In February 1840 the former assistant secretary to the Royal Asiatic Society suggested to Palmerston the capture of Taiwan as a naval and commercial base. The Japanese fear of British engulfment appeared to be real. In reality London was not yet ready to open let alone attack the Japanese coasts. During the last years of the 1840s due to commitments to other fronts and the amount of force that would be presumably needed London could not undertake such an operation. See *Ibid.*, pp. 42-72.

²⁴ Eiko Ikegami, "Citizenship and National Identity in Early Meiji Japan, 1868-1889: A Comparative Assessment" in *International Review of Social History*, Volume 40, issue S3 (1995), p. 196.

²⁵ Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, pp. 79-80.

assemble a formidable military force to subjugate Japan. The destruction that had befallen on the Chinese was down to their own deficiencies and weaknesses. Chinese short-sightedness in recognizing the danger at the time and administrative mismanagement was to blame for the present perilous situation. Another author, Ōhashi Totsuan (1816-1862) in the 1850s, defended China by proposing the adoption of a mixture of western science and Chinese ethics, since the western ones were corrupting and dedicated to the search of profit. At the time, regardless of personal preferences and beliefs the majority of scholars, pamphleteers, politicians in Japan acknowledged the superiority of western science, institutions and equipment.²⁶

The US government, after expanding to the west coast (California) as a result of the Mexican-American war (1846-1848), turned their eyes to the Pacific, posing a potential threat for Japan. American missionaries began visiting remote Pacific islands, particularly Hawaii.²⁷ In the following decades the search for markets for the nation's massive industrial and agricultural output led to an imperialist, market oriented foreign policy. The Americans planned a naval route from San Francisco to Shanghai and Japan had the misfortune to be situated along the road to the Chinese market. In the context of this policy an American vessel reached Nagasaki in April 1849, its captain asked permission from the local authorities to establish a coaling station but was forced to leave empty handed.²⁸ The foreign powers were not inclined to stomach these insults from a collection of meagre uncivilized islands for much longer. Edo could not keep on pretending that its 200-year isolationist policy was still feasible. In reality, in the capitalistic epoch of the globalization, its main actors, the imperialist powers did not intend to tolerate the existence of an autonomous, isolated island kingdom. The coincidence of western interests with those of Japan's future ruling elites made the country's insertion into this global network a matter of time.

In 1852 Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry (1794-1858) was assigned by the American President, Millard Fillmore (1800-1874) the task of opening the Japanese ports to American trade with the use of gunboat diplomacy. He was to secure trading rights, protection for American sailors and in view of the intensification of the commercial relations with China and economic rivalry with the powers, a base for coal and provisions. He visited Hong Kong and the Ryūkyūs in May 1853, where he persuaded the local ruler to open the islands to US trade. With two sailing ships and two steam frigates he reached Uraga on 8 July; his ships' guns pointing at the city. He explicitly demanded to hand over his president's letter to the highest authority in Edo or he would go ashore "with a sufficient force" and deliver it in person. After handing over the American demands to the shogunal delegates, he threatened to return for an answer in the spring of 1854 "with a much larger force"

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 85-86.

²⁷ Jennifer Fish Kashay, "Agents of Imperialism: Missionaries and Merchants in Early-Nineteenth-Century" in *The New England Quarterly*, Vol. 80, No. 2 (Jun., 2007), pp. 282-283.

²⁸ Eric T. L. Love, *Race over Empire, Racism and U.S. Imperialism 1865-1900*, (Chapper Hill, London, 2004), p. 2.

and departed. Two of the most influential lords, Hotta Masayoshi (1810-1864) and Ii Naosuke (1815-1860) acknowledged that Japan should open itself to trade, which it could prove less harmful than expected, since it was not in a position to confront the West militarily.²⁹ While the discussions were inconclusive Perry returned on 13 February 1854, much earlier than he had promised, with 8 ships and 1,600 men. The talks took place in Kanagawa, and dragged on for a month. The shogunal authorities rejected a commercial agreement like those with China but accepted the opening of the ports of Shimoda and Hakodate to American vessels, guaranteed the safety of American castaways and established an American consulate in Shimoda on 31 March 1854.³⁰ Identical agreements were signed with Britain on 14 October 1854 and Russia on 7 February 1855.³¹ Many scholars, such as Sakuma Shōzan (1811-1864) attacked the Bakufu for its humiliating stance in signing the Kanagawa Treaty. What was the use of a system that could not guarantee the safety of its own subjects and instead of repelling the foreigners was yielding to their disrespectful demands?

In reaction to the foreign danger many called for military reforms at home and adopting western methods and armaments. Besides that common point though, a total lack of unison dichotomized the Japanese society in the 1850s-1860s. The conservative Daimyo and their retainers sought reform but within the existent framework. They believed that the Shogun establishment could be renovated to rise to the western challenge. Some concessions had to be made and the Shogun had to cooperate more closely with the, until then politically inactive, imperial court in drafting national and foreign policy. The court came to be the rally point not only of the Emperor's supporters or of the advocates for radical reform. Everyone who felt underprivileged, discontent or oppressed and had every interest to bring down the current state of affairs rallied under the Emperor's banner. The Bakufu agreed to the foreign terms without consulting the Court. For the first faction signing was imperative in the face of overwhelming foreign power and military threats; for its critics the Bakufu did not rise to the circumstances and by signing the treaties selfishly gained time for its reorganization and relegated national interests to second place.³²

The scholars of the Mito school, by proclaiming the divine origin of the Emperor, criticised indirectly the Edo government, exerted great influence in the

²⁹ Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, pp. 88-92.

³⁰ The first article reaffirmed the peaceful relations of the two states. The second settled the details in regard to the opening of the two ports. The third and the fourth addressed the issue of the American castaways. The three following articles regularized monetary and product transactions in the two ports while the 9th granted to the American government the most favoured nation clause. See Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, *The Meiji Japan through contemporary sources, volume one Basic Documents, 1854-1889*, (Tokyo, 1969), pp. 1-4.

³¹ The convention with the British opened the ports of Nagasaki and Matsumae whereas the one with the Russian envoy Vice-admiral Yevfimiy Vasilyevich Putyatin (1803-1883) opened Nagasaki, Shimoda and Hokodate. These agreements were similar except the second article of the Russian treaty in which the demarcation of the Russo-Japanese border was inserted. See *Ibid.*, pp. 4-16.

³² Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, pp. 144.

population and intensified the anti-bakufu sentiment. They were predominantly anti-foreign and isolationists. To Fujita Tōko (1806-1855), the people of the sacred land were all heroes and their martial excellence was a given unquestionable fact.³³ Mootori Norinaga (1730-1801) had laid the foundations of the Emperor's cult: the Emperor as a descendant of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu and was himself a god... Loyalty and veneration to him was the "True Way". In early 19th century Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843) maintained that since the Japanese people were a broad family under the patriarchal figure of the Emperor they all had divine origin. The Japanese emperor was superior to every other ruler and so the Japanese people were superior to all other people.³⁴ Naturally the true son of heaven was entitled to reign over the "four seas and the ten thousand countries". Aizawa in 1825 asserted that the Emperor "should govern the land and control the people".³⁵ The shogun by signing disadvantageous agreements with the barbarians betrayed the Emperor's trust to rule in his name, failed in his duties to protect the people and honour the Emperor. Samurai Maki Yasuomi (1813-1864) proposed the continuation of feudalism but under the Emperor's figure. Hirano Kuniomi of Chikuzen proposed the seizure of Kyōto, in order to restore the Emperor, "extend his authority to all parts of the country", drive out the barbarians and annul the Shogun's power.³⁶

On 11 March and again in December 1863 Emperor Kōmei (1831-1867) requested the bakufu to expel the foreigners, and when that order was ignored, there resulted a crime wave against western merchants and consuls. Having agreed to open the country to trade and to protect the foreign nationals in the open ports this action was a direct challenge to Edo's authority. The Chōshū domain in the southwest acted in what it understood as accordance to the Court's orders, and defied Bakufu's authorities.³⁷ On 25 June Chōshū acting unilaterally closed the straits of Shimonoseki and fired upon American and, in the following days, French and Dutch merchant ships. In the following months Chōshū's batteries exchanged fire with passing foreign vessels. The final battle took place when an international allied force of 2,000 men comprised of British, French and Dutch troops attacked and silenced the domain's guns on 6 September 1864. The ceasefire, the re-opening of the straits and an excessive 3,000,000-dollar indemnity to the allied powers was negotiated on 14

³³ Giorgio Borsa, *La Nascita del Mondo Moderno in Asia Orientale: La penetrazione Europea e la crisi della società tradizionale in India, Cina e Giappone*, (Milan 1977), p. 336.

³⁴ Bernard Bernier, "National Communion: Watsuji Tetsuro's Conception of Ethics, Power, and the Japanese Imperial State", in *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (Jan., 2006), p. 94.

³⁵ In his books he magnified the emperor's authority: 'Our Divine Realm is where the sun emerges. It is the source of the primordial vital force sustaining all life and order. Our Emperors, descendants of the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu, have acceded to the Imperial Throne in each and every generation, a unique fact that will never change. Our Divine Realm rightly constitutes the head and shoulders of the world and controls all nations. See Eleanor Robinson-Yamaguchi, "Expelling the Barbarian and the Last Stand: Examining the Newly Established Meiji Government's Reaction to Foreign Pressure and National Strife in 1868" in *The Journal of the Faculty of Foreign Studies*, No. 47, p. 61.

³⁶ Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, p. 152.

³⁷ Richard Sims, *French Policy Towards The Bakufu and Meiji Japan 1854-95*, (Richmond, 1998), pp. 43-45.

September by the US Minister in Japan Robert Hewson Pruyn (1815-1882). Edo on 22 October 1864 assumed the responsibility of repaying this amount but its inability to do so led to intensified foreign pressure for the opening of further ports (*Hyōgo-Kōbe* or *Shimonoseki*) and the diminution of customs tariffs to 5%. Hereafter the Bakufu government was cornered by Western pressure and by its internal enemies.

On 5 July 1861 the British legation in Tōkyō was attacked by a group of anti-foreign assailants. The first Secretary of the British Legation in Japan, Oliphant (Laurence Opiphant 1829-1888) was wounded. A year earlier the official interpreter of the British Consul General Rutherford Alcock (1809-1897) was murdered in the same location. The Bakufu authorities agreed to pay an indemnity of 10,000 dollars and to punish the criminals in March 1862. In January 1861 the secretary to the American consul, Hendrick Conrad Joannes Heusken (1832-1861) was assassinated in Edo. As a result, Alcock and the other envoys sought refuge to Yokohama, where the combined naval forces could guarantee their safety. On 26 June 1862 a new attack on the legation resulted in the death of two British Royal Marines and Admiral Hope (James Hope, 1808-1881) proposed the bombardment of the forts situated at Edo as retaliation.³⁸ In November 1864, two British officers, were murdered in Wakamiya Oji in Kamakura by anti-foreign samurai. The main culprit was beheaded but many Japanese saw him as a hero fulfilling his patriotic duty.³⁹

On 14 September 1862 the Namamugi or Richardson affair took place. Satsuma samurai killed Richardson (Charles Lennox Richardson 1834-1862) and wounded two of his companions. When John Russell, (John Russell 1792-1878), the British Foreign Secretary, found out about the incident he declared that Britain would demand indemnities from both Satsuma and Edo that had failed to prevent it. At the time 5 British warships were anchored at Yokohama, and British, French and Dutch parties landed there to protect the foreign nationals. The shogunate's government wanting to avoid war promised to investigate the incident. The British, through their Chargé d'affaires in Japan, Edward St. John Neale (1812-1866), demanded a 100,000 pound indemnity and a formal apology by the Shogunate and the Satsuma domain. However, the burning to the ground of the new British legation on 1 February 1863 made matters worse.⁴⁰ On 24 January 1863 the Emperor's representative made known to the shogunate's officials that the Emperor has ordered the expulsion of every foreigner and the annulment of the treaties even if that meant war. Shogun reluctantly agreed but in the meantime tried to negotiate with the foreigners. The British were also unwilling to engage in war; after all, British exports in Japan in 1862 surpassed a million sterling pounds and in the last three years its trade had tripled. The Bakufu recognized the validity of the British demands and promised to pay the indemnity

³⁸ Grace Fox, *Britain and Japan, 1858-1883*, (London, 1969), pp. 86-97.

³⁹ Robinson-Yamaguchi, "Expelling the Barbarian", p. 63.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 99-103.

with some delay in May 1863 but in the same time the foreign consuls in Hokodate and Nagasaki urged their nationals to be ready to evacuate the country.⁴¹

The Satsuma daimyo ignored for months Edo's and British instructions. Seven ships left Yokohama on 6 August for Kagoshima, Satsuma's capital; Neale ordered Admiral Augustus Leopold Kuper (1809-1885) to commence offensive operations. After the battle the city of Kagoshima laid in ruins whereas the British suffered losses of 60 men and had many ships damaged from the city's coastal batteries. After Kuper's withdrawal both sides claimed victory. In November Satsuma promised to pay the demanded indemnity and friendly relations were restored.⁴² The incidents of Shimonoseki and Kagoshima persuaded even the most xenophobic and conservative elements that Japan had a lot to learn from the West. A concrete project of modernisation was most urgently needed for the nation's survival. Terrorist tactics did not contribute to the expulsion of the westerners but to more humiliation. From the loyalists' point of view though, the weakening of the Shogunate, even in the hands of the hated foreigners, justified the human and material losses. Indeed, the new British Minister Harry Smith Parkes (1828-1885) sensing the Bakufu's weakening and inability to impose itself upon the court and the loyalist domains of Satsuma and Chōshū called for the ratification of the treaties by the Emperor himself. If the Bakufu was incapable of guaranteeing western rights perhaps its enemies were not. In autumn 1864 Alcock proposed the use of gun-boat diplomacy to persuade the Court to accept what the shogunate had already ratified. Earlier, in June 1863, the US representative Robert Hewson Pruyn suggested naval action and simultaneously marching on land to Kyōto but the idea failed to convince the other envoys. Parkes succeeded in having the Emperor ratify the treaties on 26 November 1865.⁴³ Like Edo was compelled to do earlier, the Court had to abandon the popular expulsion policy and acknowledge the treaties, finding impractical and impossible to dislodge the foreigners.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 104.

⁴² Matsuyama Makoto, "Japan and the Western Powers", in *The North American Review*, vol. 127, No 265 (Nov-Dec., 1878), p. 413, pp. 406-426.

⁴³ Gordon Daniels, *Sir Harry Parkes, British Representative in Japan 1865-1883*, (Richmond, 1996), pp. 39-41.

⁴⁴ The foreigners had come to stay. As in other parts of Asia they created quasi-autonomous communities in commercially important Japanese cities. By 1865 the foreign citizens in Yokohama, numbering more than 300 organized a municipal council for the development of the settlement. Trade was flourishing and the security of the settlement was entrusted to 5,000 soldiers with peace keeping duties. In Nagasaki the trade's value was not as high with fewer merchants with virtually no need for a garrison. Lastly the port of Hakodate in Hokkaidō, isolated and frozen for many months annually was an open port only in paper. Only at that northern port there was a Russian representation in place seemingly to maintain territorial and limited commercial interests. Despite this fact the British authorities feared a Russian expansion in warmer seas, presumably in the coast of Korea or the Tsushima islands. See J. E. Hoare, *Japan's Treaty Ports and Foreign Settlements: The Uninvited Guests 1858-1899* (Folkenstone 1994), pp. 20-23. Reason for discontent was the presence of foreign troops on Japanese soil, which it considered a violation of its sovereign rights. Since 1863 British and French troops were protecting their legations in Yokohama. See Sims, *French Policy*, p. 75.

On 7 March 1866, a Chōshū-Satsuma anti-bakufu alliance was concluded. Edo in September 1864 and May 1865 failed to subdue the two most powerful and military modernized clans and for a military regime this meant loss of prestige and degeneration. More importantly the Tokugawa shogunate appeared powerless and many turned their sights towards Kyōto for effective, centralized leadership.⁴⁵ The shogun, Tokugawa Yoshinobu (1837-1913) also known as Keiki, nominated officially on 10 January 1867, was anxious to strengthen his government and promoted a series of administrative and military reforms under Paris' auspices. The French Consul General Léon Roches (1809-1900) appointed in October 1863 was known for his pro-bakufu feelings and his rivalry with his British colleague Parkes who favoured the shogun's enemies. He also dispatched military missions to Edo in many occasions, notably in February 1867 to reorganize the government's armies. Through his diplomatic manoeuvres and provision of weapons, loans and support he tried to balance his country's lack of commercial interests in Japan and to limit the potential rise of another power's influence in Edo. By surpassing the British influence, he sought political benefits for France such as the acquisition of an ally or at the very least the lease of a naval base in the Orient. A naval base would be useful in the occasion of an intervention in Korea due to the frequent attacks on French shipping and the maltreatment of French missionaries.⁴⁶

On 30 January 1867 emperor Kōmei died and the fifteenth year-old Matsuhito (1852-1912), ascended to the throne on 3 February 1867 as Emperor Meiji. The loyalist conspirators feared that the young emperor would fail to preserve the national unity against the Bakufu and to pacify the country. Satsuma and Chōshū moved their troops toward the capital, reaching Kyōto on 18 December and Ōsaka on the 31st. After this point there was no coming back.⁴⁷ Iwakura Tomomi, perhaps the most prominent imperial statesman of the time, on 2 and 3 January summoned to his home in Kyōto the leaders of the loyalist domains to devise a political plan. The Emperor was to assume his ancient responsibilities in governing the land because of the need to "restore the country's prestige".⁴⁸

On 10 January the representatives of the powers, assembled at Keiki's castle and declared that they would stay neutral in regard to Japan's internal dispute. Parkes in particular was concerned that Russia might find the moment appropriate to occupy Japanese territory. Parkes despite the British proclamation of neutrality during the civil war urged Admiral Henry Keppel (1809-1904) to maintain a naval force of 7 ships in Japanese ports in case the lives and properties of British citizens were in danger.⁴⁹ On 27 January the shogun's partially modernised force of approximately 10,000 men was defeated while en route by 6,000 imperial troops armed with

⁴⁵George M. Wilson, "Plots and Motives in Japan's Meiji Restoration" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Jul., 1983), pp. 415-416.

⁴⁶Sims, *French Policy*, p. 62.

⁴⁷Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, pp. 276-287.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 290-292.

⁴⁹Fox, *Britain and Japan*, p. 218.

howitzers, Gatling guns and modern rifles. Following Keiki's will to abdicate as early as 9 November 1867, the Meiji Restoration, Matsuhito's resumption of the country's direct rule was officially proclaimed on 3 January 1868. From that point on the Emperor was seen as a symbol of change and as the building block of a new nation. Nonetheless the Tokugawa forces were still resisting. The imperial forces under general Saigō Takamori (1828-1877), after some successful skirmishes entered on 3 May 1868 the Edo castle and the Shogun officially surrendered. Ten days later Prince Arisugawa accepted the capitulation on behalf of the emperor but the civil conflict that would be known as the Boshin war, was not over yet. 3,000 Tokugawa followers revolted in Edo but Saigō suppressed the uprising. On 3 September 1868 the city was renamed to Tōkyō and after mid-1869 the Emperor made the former shogun's castle his residence.⁵⁰

Enomoto Takeaki (1836-1908), admiral of the Tokugawa navy, fled with the remnants of the shogunal navy in Hokkaidō to organize the Tokugawa counter attack with the northern Daimyo, Bakufu officials and the French advisors still employed by the shogunate. In May in northern Japan a coalition of 50,000 men from five domains (Aizu, Sendai, Yonizawa, Nagaoka and Shōnai) were ready to defend their feudal rights against the Satsuma-Chōshū "evil advisers" that manipulated the Emperor. Through a series of failed battles and castle sieges the alliance crumbled in September. By the end of the year Saigō had pacified the north but at a considerable human and material cost.⁵¹ Enomoto's facing defeat, requested that the Ezo be made a Tokugawa domain under imperial rule.⁵² Upon the rejection of his proposal he proclaimed the establishment of the independent Republic of Ezo on 27 January 1869. Enomoto was voted president by his followers. Thereafter he organized the island's fortifications and troops. An infantry invasion, after a brief engagement, took hold of Hakodate, forcing President Enomoto to declare the republic's dissolution on 26 June. Casualties amounted approximately to 10,000 men and the rancour, animosity and discontent would remain for years to come; however, by the autumn of 1869 Japan was finally unified and pacified. For the West final victory meant the Emperor's ascension as the supreme ruler, the substitution of the name of the shogun from the previous treaties with the emperor's and the beginning of direct diplomatic relation between the West and the Court. The Emperor on 30 March 1868 issued the Imperial Decree Banning Anti-Foreign Violence. Many of the Daimyo and common people

⁵⁰ Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, pp. 295-296.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 298.

⁵² Ezo was neglected for centuries and was not considered an integral part of Japan as the other main islands of Kyūshū, Shikoku and Honshū. Enomoto's actions indirectly brought formal Japanese rule in a territory that was believed to be part of Saint Petersburg's imperialistic plans; he defended a disputed territory for Tokugawa and Japan's sake. The rebel Enomoto was only briefly imprisoned. Partially because of his skills and efforts to develop Ezo (on 20 September 1869 it was officially renamed to Hokkaidō), partially because of his courage in battle he was nominated ambassador to Russia in 1874, Deputy Foreign Minister in 1879, Minister of the Navy in 1880-1, Minister to Peking in 1882, Minister of Communications in 1885-1889, of Education in 1889-1890, of Foreign Affairs in 1891-2 and of Agriculture and Commerce in 1894-1897. See Mark R. Peattie, *Nan'yo: The Rise and Fall of the Japanese in Micronesia, 1885-1945*, (Honolulu, 1988), pp. 6-7.

who saw in the face of the Emperor a strong figure that would finally expel the barbarians felt betrayed.⁵³

In regard to the country's foreign relations, the new Meiji government, due to a second round of xenophobic attacks, found itself almost immediately in a difficult position. On 4 February 1868, 150 samurai from the domain of Bizen clashed with a foreign contingent near the city of Kōbe. Ten days later the government accepted in full the western demands for reparations and the punishment of the culprits, despite the fact that at the time it was not strong enough to enforce such a decision within the country. Amidst the civil war, still in progress, its decision could provoke discontent or even worse an internal rebellion. In its submissive way, the government at least guaranteed the powers' neutrality. The man that was found responsible committed ritual suicide and the imperial government successfully resolved its first international challenge.⁵⁴

On 8 March 1868 the Sakai incident took place, the next crisis of Meiji-Western relations, when 11 French sailors were brutally murdered at Sakai near Ōsaka by Tosa retainers.⁵⁵ Roches on 12 March presented a list of formal demands to the Japanese government. Itō Hirobumi (1841-1909), at the time an official of the Foreign Ministry, blamed the French for the incident, who by their landing had violated Japanese sovereignty and harassed the local community. All this may have been true but once again the government was still too weak to oppose the foreigners and agreed to their humiliating demands. Foreign support for the Bakufu or a direct armed intervention would signify a premature end to the court's aspirations. Roches recognized the imperial leadership's sincerity and suitable handling of the matter. Last but not least, the attack on the British Minister Parkes in Kyōto occurred on 23 March (Nawate Incident). Parkes encouraged the government to condemn this kind of attacks and to punish the ones responsible as common criminals by beheading, and deprive them the possibility of an honourable suicide. On March the government notified the foreign representatives of its decree against attacks on foreigners issued some days earlier. It declared that persons attacking foreigners would be acting against the sovereign's wishes and would jeopardize Japan's national dignity.⁵⁶

The men that came to power in January 1868, had to wage and win a civil war, find resources to fund the war effort and administer the territories that they already held. Subsequently by overthrowing the Bakufu they inherited its responsibilities. In February 1868 the court formed seven departments inspired by the ancient imperial institutions (Daijōkan): Shintō (religion), Home, Foreign, Military Affairs, Finance, Organization and Justice. At the same time steps were taken so that the domains could

⁵³ Fox, *Britain and Japan*, pp. 220-223.

⁵⁴ William D. Hoover, "Crisis Revolution in Early Meiji Diplomatic Relations: The Role of Godai Tomoatsu", in *Journal of Asian History*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (1975), pp. 59-61, pp. 57-81.

⁵⁵ Walter Wallace McLaren, *A Political History Of Japan During The Meiji Era 1867-1912*, (London, New York 1916), p. 52.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 75-80.

send delegates to a samurai assembly (lower chamber), giving voice to those that did not have an active role in the government. In 1869 a new civil service code was issued and the Ministry of Shintō Affairs was set up.⁵⁷ The Bakufu and its allies' lands were confiscated by the government and placed under the administration of imperial officials as fu (cities) and ken (prefectures). In December 1868 a similar arrangement was enforced upon more daimyo lands. In March 1869 the lords of the loyalist domains were persuaded to offer to the court to promote centralization. The leadership had supported the abolition of the domains both because such an act would eradicate regionalist internal divisions and because national defence needed a unified national army not an amalgam of different military organizations. In August of 1871 the government felt consolidated enough to attempt the domains' abolition, an important step towards centralization.⁵⁸

The Daijōkan the administrative structure of the 8th century, was revived (June 1868) and remained in effect until the modern executive Cabinet was formulated in December 1885. The Daijōkan structure divided power into three separate branches, legislative, administrative, and judicial.⁵⁹ The top position that supervised every other was that of the Minister of the Right, which was held by Sanjō Sanetomi. In 1875, when the Supreme Court and a Senate of Elders (Genrōin) were established. The latter was a bureaucratic, peerage drawn assembly that was able to review and propose legislation but not actually shape it.⁶⁰ Many lamented the fact that the government acted as a despotic clique, ignoring the peoples' wishes. Indicatively the years from 1873 to 1878 are sometimes called as the period of "Ōkubo despotism". Indeed, the higher positions were held by a Satsuma, Chōshū, Tosa and Hizen oligarchy of samurai that had previously brought about the Restoration.⁶¹

While the government permitted the opening of prefectural assemblies it also issued laws restricting public gatherings (1880) and freedom of press (1875). The government eventually accepted the creation of a national assembly with the Emperor promising the opening of a parliament by 1890 on 12 October 1881.⁶² In 1885 the Daijōkan was abolished and a western style cabinet took its place; the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Home Affairs, Finance, Army, Navy, Justice, Education, Agriculture and Commerce were established. The Ministry of the Imperial Household was established under Sanjō Sanetomi to act as the liaison between the court and the

⁵⁷ Ryōsuke Ishii, *History of Political Institutions in Japan*, (Tokyo, 1980), pp. 101-102.

⁵⁸ The districts were designated with the April 1871 Household Registration Law. Precisely a year later the Chinese invented village administration system, based on collective responsibility of an area, was abolished in Japan. See George Oakley Totten, "Adoption of the Prussian Model For Municipal Government in Meiji Japan: Principles and Compromises" in *The Developing Economies*, Vol. 15(4) (Dec. 1977), pp. 489-490.

⁵⁹ Jintarō Fujii, *Japanese Culture in the Meiji Era. Volume VII. Outline of Japanese History*, (Tokyo, 1958), p. 32.

⁶⁰ Paolo Beonio Brocchieri, *I Movimenti Politici del Giappone*, (Rome, 1971), p. 15.

⁶¹ Ishii, *History of Political Institutions*, pp. 101-103.

⁶² Ibid., pp. 106-108.

government. At the same time the political independence of the court was safeguarded by the transfer of large state properties. Preparations for the promulgation of the constitution were underway but the state continued to suppress political movements: the Liberal party was disbanded in 1883 and the Rikken Teiseitō (Constitutional Imperial Rule Party) survived for only two years from 1882 to 1884.⁶³ On 25 December 1887 the government announced the Peace Preservation Law that enabled it to expel from the capital any dissident⁶⁴ In 1888 Itō became the president of the newly established Privy Council and engaged personally in the drafting of the constitution since the draft prepared by the Genrōin was too liberal for his liking.⁶⁵ Late developing nations such as Japan, anxious to safeguard their fragile new-born national unity and to catch up with the economically more advanced nations, often relegated people's rights and democratization to second place. The priority of the nation building policy that the Meiji leaders had adopted was the creation of a sound economic basis that would support a strong state and an effective army to defend the nation against the machinations of western imperialism.⁶⁶

Let us return to the first years after the Restoration. In October-December 1870 new taxation and administration regulations were issued. Discontent was high among those that did not approve the government's financial policies. Sources of unrest were also disbanded soldiers after the civil war. As a result, officials that were known as reformers were often assassinated in 1869-1871. The period between 1868 and early 1869 due to inflation, civil war and crop failures saw a series of peasant revolts erupt. In the first ten years of Meiji administration (1868-1878) at least 508 revolts took place. 208 of them occurred during the first three years.⁶⁷

The reformists, individuals that had been abroad and had studied foreign institutions and practises were convinced that, initially military and then economic and political modernisations, along the western lines, would realise the urgent goals of independence and diplomatic equality in the face of foreign imperialism. Japan at the time of the Restoration was fortunate that the besieging powers were busy carving up China, a struggle that left Japan out of their political control but in a semi-colonial status. China was apparently more attractive to foreign capitalism due to its vast

⁶³ Brocchieri, *I Movimenti Politici*, p. 26.

⁶⁴ Besides the deportation law, secret assemblies and societies were prohibited and pamphlets and books that instigated rebellion were subject to confiscation. See Fujii, *Japanese Culture in the Meiji Era*, p. 233.

⁶⁵ Ishii, *History of Political Institutions*, pp. 112-114.

⁶⁶ The diplomat Kaneko Kentarō (1853-1942) supported the emulation of a Great Power with strong imperial authority: "Germany is the country whose fortunes are presently on the rise, and upon whom the greatest hopes may be placed for the future. Moreover, in today's world there are few monarchs who possess authority as great as that of the German Kaiser. It may be that if you desire to maintain the monarchic form of government in perpetuity, you cannot but give the emperor vast sovereign powers. The British monarchy is peculiar to Britain, and not something easily emulated in other lands". See Kazuhiro Takii, *The Meiji Constitution: The Japanese Experience of the West and the Shaping of the Modern State*, (Tokyo, 2007), p. 132.

⁶⁷ Herbert P. Bix, *Peasant Protest in Japan, 1590-1884*, (London, 1986), pp. 172-173.

population and ineffective domestic rule.⁶⁸ In Japan they contented themselves with economic penetration, port facilities and unequal treaties.⁶⁹ With the occasion of the Iwakura mission in various western states, aiming to achieve the recognition of the new regime and to initiate the reforms that would annul the effects of the detrimental, demeaning unequal treaties, Prime Minister Sanjō Sanetomi wrote in October 1871 that Japan "lost her equal rights and been made subject to the insults and wrongs of others" so that "the principle of equality between Japanese and foreigner, of reciprocity between East and West, is not maintained" and "We must restore our country's rights and remedy the faults in our laws and institutions; we must abandon the arbitrary habits of the past, returning to a rule of clemency and straightforwardness; and we must set ourselves to restore the rights of the people...seeking thereby to achieve equality with the powers". The Japanese had to prove that they were civilized and worthy of being treated as equal members of the international society.⁷⁰ With these thoughts in mind a vast, ambitious, historically unique process of modernisation was implemented by the Meiji leadership.

The Meiji restoration marked Japan's abrupt rupture with traditional social values, the beginning of its ascension to the Great Power status that took place in the 20th century, its historically unique, for a non-western nation, process of modernisation-industrialization, while all the while being an anomaly of a semi-colonized state that assimilated and put to practise the doctrines of imperialism as early as the 1870s. Albeit interesting this thesis' aim is not to trace every social change, reform, infrastructural improvement, law codification of the early Meiji period that led to these later developments. This chapter will rather examine the incentives of the anomaly's components: the initial cultural elements (religion, education, tradition), the foreign influences, the role of the army and of the economy that formed the ideological background for the territorial expansion debate and made

⁶⁸Hidemi Suganami, "Japan's entry into International Society" in *Meiji Japan. Political, Economic and Social History 1868-1912*, Volume 1, ed. P. Kornicki, (London 1998), pp. 13-14.

⁶⁹ The representatives of the western nations felt that they could not rely on the inadequate legal and economic systems of the oriental countries. Fixed tariffs, which restricted income from custom duties and consular jurisdiction, were perceived as an insult to national honour. The Western powers also demanded the establishment of modern codes of law and legal systems in order to abandon their extraterritoriality privileges. Since the expulsion of the foreign influence initially was not feasible by military means the Japanese, amidst financial hardships, promoted modernisation at home. Geostrategic anxiety deriving from Western aggression convinced the Meiji leaders that national independence was synonymous to westernization. The West would only respect its own institutions. Recognition by the West of a successful modernization programme was perceived to be as good as real institutional reform and would signify the annulment of the humiliating treaties. So rapid modernization was the first step towards the revision of the unequal agreements; this revision was Meiji leadership's main priority throughout the 19th century as it appears from their constant and tenacious efforts to negotiate, alter and eventually annul the treaties. The ultimate goal was securing independence and achieving legal and moral parity vis-à-vis the prestigious protagonists of the 19th century's international system. Michael R. Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism. The Unequal Treaties and the Culture of Japanese Diplomacy*, (Cambridge-London, 2004), p. 25 and Turan Kayaoglu, *Legal Imperialism: Sovereignty and Extraterritoriality in Japan, the Ottoman Empire and China*, (New York 2010), pp. 89-93.

⁷⁰ Kavalam Panikkar, *Storia della dominazione Europea in Asia dal cinquecento ai nostri giorni*, (Turin, 1958), pp. 218-219.

the ruling classes' imperialistic schemes appear feasible. Furthermore, the study of the newly born state's foreign relations will enable us not only to approach more coherently its manoeuvres in the late 19th century political chessboard, but also to trace the origins and the reasoning on which these were based on. Lastly, the relations of the early Meiji state with the West were dictated by the provisions of the unequal treaties, a phenomenon that hugely shaped its reactionary, self-affirming, aggressive, imitative imperialistic disposition and as such one which requires a deeper look.

After the Restoration the government was confronted by grave financial difficulties. The civil war had drained the court's treasury and revenue was hard to secure in a war torn country. The precarious position of the Meiji leaders meant that they could not rely on custom duties, subject to limitations by the unequal treaties, or levy new taxes. In 1868 state revenue amounted to 3,7 million yen while the expenditures rose to 25. The following year expenditure was at 20,8 million and income at 10,5. The chaotic situation was exacerbated by the circulation of several inconvertible notes and the coexistence of silver, gold and 1,500 varieties of clan coins. After the termination of the Boshin war, expenses were lowered and inflation disappeared as a result of the consolidation of a centralized modern state.⁷¹ The abolition of the domains transferred both the cost of local administration and their feudal debts to Tōkyō. The government after the abolition of the domains assumed their liabilities that amounted to 78 million to be repaid to domestic and foreign creditors.⁷² In 1872 total expenses reached 58 million yen whereas revenue rose to 33 and the government issued more than 73 million yen that year. By 1875 Tōkyō however, had managed to repay its former loans. A new 3,7-million-yen loan from London was secured in 1869 for the construction of a railway line and in 1872 a 10,7 million loan was provided for the settlement of costs produced by the abolition of feudalism. Witnessing the miserable situation in China and understanding the connection between foreign credit and military-political intervention the Meiji leadership were disinclined to secure further loans from the West.⁷³ National debt for

⁷¹ In 1871 the one-yen coin equal in weight and content with the widely used in East Asia Mexican dollar was minted. In 1897 the country adopted the gold standard as a means of financial stability and trade expansion. See Michael Schiltz, "Money on the road to empire: Japan's adoption of the gold monometallism, 1873-97" in *Economic History Review*, 65, 3 (2012), pp. 1149-1151.

⁷² In March 1873 it was decided to erase all domestic debts before 1844. The adjustment of rates and negotiations with foreign creditors decreased the amount to 26 million. 22 million had to be added that amount however to cover the domain money still in circulation. See Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, pp. 381-382.

⁷³ George Bailey Sansom, *The Western World and Japan, A Study in the Interaction of European and Asian Cultures*, (London, 1960), p. 528-529. Sakatani Yoshiro (1863-1941), Director of the Bureau of Computation of the Department of Finance in 1897 claimed that the examples of Turkey and Egypt were revealing enough for Japan to become reluctant to plunge into debt and foreign loans. Mori Arinori (1847-1889) the ambassador to London during the Egyptian crisis (1879-1884) was following closely the developments. Foreign debts, rebellion, massacre of Westerners and foreign occupation in 1882 were a constant reminder of the dangers of Western-Japanese interaction. In 1890 the author Shiba Shirō (1852-1922) in his *History of Modern Egypt* condemned the British imperialist methods. He expressed his sympathy for the nationalistic independence movement of Orabi Pasha and envisaged

the fiscal year of 1877 exceeded the astonishing amount of 240 million yen. Itō proposed the adoption of the American banking model but the four national banks established in 1873-1874 failed in their task to issue money and upgrade state finances. From 55 million yen in June 1876 the expenditure reached 254 million in two years resulting in the reappearance of violent inflation and the doubling of the rice price between 1877 and 1881.⁷⁴ The feeble financial establishment was ready to crumble under the weight of the imbalance of payments and government efforts to reorganize the army, establish western style schools and improve roads, facilities and all the necessary infrastructure that a modern state needed to survive amidst the late 19th century economic-political antagonism. Only after 1881 the situation was stabilised under the measures taken by the Finance Minister Matsukata (Matsukata Masayoshi 1835-1924). The negative side of Matsukata's policies was the extra burden on the peasants that had to sell their properties and the collapse of many entrepreneurs who had to sell their companies to bigger firms. Between 1883 and 1890 more than 367,000 peasants lost their land because they were unable to pay land taxes.⁷⁵

The growing expenditure on western style reforms and in particular the military costs made the need for cash inflow to the state treasury a vital matter, one which the entire process of nation building and modernisation hinged on.⁷⁶ Iwakura, aware of the fact that the state could not afford paying the samurai, that were not state servants anymore, proposed the gradual cutback of the stipends in the summer of 1870. A long debate followed. In 1873, samurai were given the option to convert their stipends into twenty-year bonds; in 1876 this conversion became mandatory. A total

an oriental alliance against the Russian, British and French rapacity. Many Japanese leaders visited the exiled Orabi in Ceylon where he was deported by the British after their victory and the author Nomura Saiichi in 1892 aroused public sympathy for the Egyptian cause through his writings. Egypt was seen as a fellow, endangered and oppressed country that had contributed greatly to world civilization like Japan. From these events and their effect on psychological disposition the emergence of a "pan-Oriental" instead of a pan-Asian anti-western front can be recognized. The "Orient" included North Africa, Middle East and the Far East according to the author Miyazaki Yazō in 1892: "Let China once revive and base itself upon its true morality, then India will rise, Siam and Annam too will revive, and the Philippines and Egypt can be saved". When Japan seemed to evade the colonization threat, after the Sino-Japanese War the Japanese leaders appeared to be allying themselves with the British colonizers instead. In record time Tōkyō passed to the camp of the oppressors and Egypt from a fraternal nation became a colonization model. In October 1894 Inoue Kaoru was dispatched to Korea as Japan's Extraordinary Envoy. After a brief study he informed the Prime Minister Itō Hirobumi that he intended to follow in Korea the same policy "which England follows in Egypt". Itō, according to the Belgian Ambassador was always claiming that Japan doesn't desire to annex Korea but "to establish herself as a protector in imitation of England in Egypt, France in Tunisia and Madagascar and Austria in Bosnia and Herzegovina". See Bradshaw, *Japan and European colonialism*, pp. 116-147, pp. 151-152.

⁷⁴ Between 1879 and 1881 commodities' prices rose by 26%. The total trade deficit of 51 million yen in 1872-1881 and the military expenses for the Satsuma rebellion complicated the already unstable economic situation. See Hugh T. Patrick, "External Equilibrium and Internal Convertibility: Financial Policy in Meiji Japan" in *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (Jun., 1965), pp. 198-199, pp. 187-213.

⁷⁵ George C. Allen, *A Short History of Modern Japan, 1867-1937*, (London, 1962), pp. 39-48.

⁷⁶ Ohkawa, "Capital formation in Japan", pp. 148-149.

of 173 million yen in bonds and 730,000 yen in cash were paid to 313,000 individuals to compensate the loss of their stipends.⁷⁷ The loss of privileges and stipends and the creation of a national army based on conscription signified the end of the samurai class. These developments in conjunction with the dissatisfaction about the western patterned reforms and the enforcement of new taxes drove many impoverished and outraged peasants and former samurai to open revolts in 1868-1873. 66 of these outbreaks were about heavy taxation. In December 1871 the Finance Ministry anxious to secure more revenue increased the tax on owner-cultivator land. The land tax reform proclaimed on 28 July 1873 was the state's main income source for decades to come. The law drove many peasants to sell their crops for cash for which they were neither ready or savvy enough and that led to an increase in the price of tenancy rights and loss of land due to the financial hardships.⁷⁸ Agriculture was by far the most important sector in terms of the economy's total output and employment until the First World War. In 1880-1885 the agricultural sector generated 65-70% of the total state income. In the 1870s the government decided to promote industrial and agricultural production since an abrupt transformation of the peasants to skilled workers was not possible. Farm products were necessary to feed a growing population⁷⁹ and as a counterweight for the vast imports of mechanized equipment, fundamental for the nascent Japanese industry. Agricultural exports amounted for 70 to 80% of the early Meiji exports abroad. Tōkyō quickly perceived agricultural production as both an external and an internal source of income, through taxes, encouraged technical improvements and agricultural education. It also set out to eliminate the parasitic feudal privileges, rights, restraints and obligations⁸⁰ set up by the Tokugawa.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, pp. 385-389.

⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 390-398. For some scholars the miserable position of the peasants during the Tokugawa era did not actually improve in the first years after the Restoration because of the harsh land tax. See Morris David Morris, "The Problem of the Peasant Agriculturalist in Meiji Japan, 1873-1885" in *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (May 1956), pp. 357-358.

⁷⁹ In 1850 the total population was approximately 30 million and in 1872 it was estimated at around 33 million. By 1889 the population had reached 40 million. Around 1900 the number was 44 million, an increase, from 1872, of 33%. In the same time just 14% of the 112,000 square miles was cultivable, an extremely limited space to sustain 400,000 "fresh mouths" each year. A solution could be given by immigrating to neighbouring Korea, which presumably could support a further 8 to 10 million people. See James Murdoch, "Japan and Russia" in *The North American Review*, Vol. 170, No. 522 (May, 1900), pp. 633-624, pp. 609-633. Between 1875 and 1880 the population increased by two million, an annual rate of 12.43 per thousand per year. At that time death by famine was eradicated and birth rates were rising. Meiji leaders propagandized the benefits of an enlarged population for the nation for defence purposes and instilled to the people the notion that a big family is everyone's patriotic duty. See Makoto, "Japan and the Western Powers", pp. 381-383.

⁸⁰ For the historian Halliday, the Restoration did not signal the total liberation of the citizens from the feudal-oligarchic bonds as the French Revolution did. See John Halliday, *Storia del Giappone Contemporaneo. La Politica del Capitalismo Giapponese dal 1850 a Oggi*, (Turin, 1979), pp. 51-52.

⁸¹ James I. Nakamura, *Agricultural Production and the Economic Development of Japan 1873-1922*, (New Jersey, 1966), p. 18.

Sericulture and tea were the two products that helped preserve a commercial balance of trade (sericulture amounted to 5.6% of the value of the total gross production between 1875 and 1880) and rice was exported steadily from 1872 to 1887 despite the urbanization trend and its high consumption at home. In 1879 40% of the total manufacturing production originated from the countryside: sake, millet, textiles and soy sauce. Traditional and early modern production techniques, still elementary though, co-existed and the "rurality" of the Japanese manufacture sector, mainly due to the textile exports, would persist until the First World War.⁸² The prestigious position of Japanese silk and its products in the international market in 1867-1870 used both in weaving and in spinning made the need for modernisation a secondary one. Between 1875 and 1880 crude silk yarn, exported through the port of Yokohama, reached from 7% of the total exports to 30.4%.⁸³ The cotton sector, amidst global competition, was in need of investments and state intervention. Only in 1885-1895 did the Japanese cotton become competitive abroad and confronted the foreign imported cotton yarns. The production of wool, unsustainable by the private sector alone, also received state subsidies. Nevertheless in 1872-1877 wool imports accounted for the 19% per cent of the total. The opening of the ports to foreign merchants without protectionist measures increased trade between Japan and the West: between 1860-1 and 1864-65 it tripled. In 1863 60% of the total imports were textile products and 20% metals necessary for the development of domestic arms and shipbuilding industries. From 1860 until 1865 silk products and tea amounted approximately to 65% of the total exports to Europe and the US. In any case imports exceeded by far exports increasing the trade deficit. Massive exportation was seen as the solution for strengthening commercial ties and modernising the state. Some kind of equilibrium was achieved only in late 1880s. In the early Meiji period paddy field farming was not substantially different from the methods and the equipment employed during the late Tokugawa period. The state's lack of funds undermined any investment attempt. Moreover, tenant and semi-tenant farmers, who engaged in extremely measly farming practises under the pressure of rents, accounted for 60-70% of the agrarian workforce.⁸⁴

Today there is an ongoing controversy regarding the annual growth rate of agricultural production. Some put the growth rate after 1868 at 4% arguing that this development enabled the accumulation of capital, the financing of other sectors and, through commerce, it generated foreign exchange for the import of materials that were used in industrialization. For others, innovation and a limited growth came gradually in the 1890s. Phosphatic fertilizer was introduced in 1888 whereas Ammonium Sulphate as late as 1900. Drainage, technical innovations, land reclamation and irrigation improvements achieved only limited success. Political

⁸² Kenichi Ohno, *The Economic Development of Japan. The Path Traveled by Japan as a Developing Country*, (Tokyo, 2006), pp. 72-72.

⁸³ Claudio Zanier, *Accumulazione e Sviluppo Economico in Giappone dalla Fine del XVI alla Fine del XIX secolo*, (Turin, 1975), pp. 128-133.

⁸⁴ Fujii, *Japanese Culture in the Meiji Era*, pp. 510-511.

instability caused by events such as the Satsuma Rebellion in 1877 and the subsequent inflation benefited only those few landlords who had a surplus to sell. The status of tenants and small landowning peasants was further deteriorated by the deflationary policy of the Finance Minister Matsukata as already mentioned. In 1881 the price of rice was reduced from 8,86 yen per koku (Japanese unit of volume, 278 litres) to 5 yen per koku.⁸⁵ A third group claims that Tokogawa period's agricultural and manufacturing production was not as backward as many may imply and served as the background for the following impressive or somewhat impressive boom. Western mechanized products, weapons and books were introduced in the early 19th century.⁸⁶ The existence of a unified national self-sustaining market during the shogunate period and the inherent Japanese propensity to save, as argued by some scholars, seems to give some credit to this theory.⁸⁷

Japanese foreign trade was dictated by western imperialism, that is by the limitations, rules and framework imposed by the unequal treaties. Under these constraints and the absence of the protective high tariffs it was only in the 20th century that Japanese capitalism was adapted, specialized and became competitive. In the 1860s-1890s though, foreign merchants, inexperience and obsolete methods of trading produced harsh conditions for the native merchants.⁸⁸ In 1863 34% of the foreign trade's total value represented imports of western products. In 1867 this figure increased to 61% and in 1870 to 71%.⁸⁹ Foreign products such as British textiles dominated the market, hampered domestic production, with the economy haemorrhaging reserves and cash abroad.⁹⁰ In 1870 Japanese exports accounted for 14 million yen and foreign imports for 34.⁹¹ In May 1868 and in January 1869 the transit barriers between the domains and on the national highways were lifted respectively as the Meiji government attempted to unify and enhance the home market. Bridges and ferry systems were constructed and free travel in the country was allowed. Free trade in the form of unhindered commercial activity became possible

⁸⁵ Radha Sinha, "Agriculture and Economic Development in Meiji Japan" in *Development and Change*, Volume 10, Issue 4, (October 1979), pp. 603-617, pp. 601-625.

⁸⁶ Ian Inkster, "Meiji Economic Development in Perspective: Revisionist Comments upon the Industrial Revolution in Japan" in *The Developing Economies*, vol. 17 issue 1 (March 1979), pp. 47-63.

⁸⁷ John Whitney Hall, "From Tokugawa to Meiji in Japanese Local Administration" in *Studies in the Institutional History of Early Modern Japan*, ed. J. W. Hall, M. B. Yansen, (New Jersey, 1968), p. 375, pp. 375-388.

⁸⁸ Foreign merchants in the Japanese treaty ports did not enjoy only their government's protection in the form of their intimidating war ships at bay. They also drew capital and support from western credit institutions in China (Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation and Oriental Banking Corporation) whereas Japanese merchants were helpless. See Allen, *A Short History*, p. 35.

⁸⁹ In the first 8 years after the Restoration, the average amount of annual trade was 40,895,390 dollars; that of imports over exports 7,255,164 dollars. The aggregate amount of total trade was 347,610,818 dollars, and the total balance against Japan amounted to 61,668,892 dollars. Japanese exports to Britain amounted to less than 4,000,000 dollars in 1866 and 9,000,000 dollars in 1877, while British exports to Japan in 1866 were approximately 15,000,000. They exceeded that figure in 1877. See Makoto, "Japan and the Western Powers", pp. 415-417.

⁹⁰ While the international exchange ratio for gold and silver was then 1:15 the ratio in Japan was 1:6 or 1:5. In practice that meant that large quantities of gold left the country for the West while cheaper silver poured in. See Takeshi Toyoda, *A History of pre-Meiji commerce in Japan*, (Tokyo, 1969), p. 92.

⁹¹ John Whitney Hall, "From Tokogawa to Meiji ", pp. 61-62.

after the abolition of the domains in 1871. In the years after the Restoration the average Japanese, nurtured for centuries in a Confucian ideology hostile to profit making and lacking capital was not disposed to invest their meagre hard-earned savings in uncertain endeavours. Under the immature financial, social and legal environment an entrepreneur class inclined to invest in foreign or domestic ventures could not be formed.⁹² Inexperience, lack of funds and of credit institutions meant that the trade was in the hands of foreign commercial firms: in 1874 99.5% of the total exports and 99.9% of the total imports was directed by western merchants.⁹³ Still in 1894 foreign trade was managed by Western Trading companies in Yokohama and other ports. The aforementioned lack of capital, foreign preponderance and the small scale manufacturing production brought about the failure of the state initiative. Political confusion and insecurity amidst the depressing economic conditions after the abolition of the domains certainly weakened even further the commercial interactions in Ōsaka, Tōkyō, Kyōto.⁹⁴

After the loss of their privileged status and pensions, former samurai found themselves in a grave financial situation. Given their temperament their discontent could erupt in a full scale revolution, as it did in numerous occasions, and overthrow the new leadership. That is why finding occupation for them was a matter of life and death for the government. After the Restoration with every new measure proclaimed by the government⁹⁵ the warrior class lost its benefits and military function.⁹⁶ The samurai class did not entirely disappear; it was incorporated to the modern Japanese society shifting it from the inside towards reactionary and warlike attitudes. It should also be noted that many of the anti-foreign samurai of the previous era that committed or incited attacks against the foreigners in line with the "expel the barbarian" idea were now leading members of the military and the Meiji government.⁹⁷

Every economic sector in the 1870s was considered backward to Western standards and in need of huge investments and infrastructural upgrades.⁹⁸ That was particularly true about the manufacturing sector which was traditional and slow-growing so that one cannot speak about Japanese mass industrial production until the late 1890s and for some historians until the 1910s.⁹⁹ In other words, in the 1890s a

⁹² John P. Tang, "Technological leadership and late development: evidence from Meiji Japan, 1868–1912" in *Economic History Review*, 64, S1 (2011), p. 102.

⁹³ Zanier, *Accumulazione e Sviluppo*, pp. 295-299.

⁹⁴ Hideichi Horie, "The Agricultural Structure of Japan in the Period of Meiji Restoration" in *Kyoto University Economic Review*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (71) (Oct., 1961), pp. 1-5.

⁹⁵ Herbert E. Norman, *Japan's Emergence as a Modern State. Political and Economic Problems of the Meiji Period*, (New York 1940), pp. 84-85.

⁹⁶ Harry D. Harootunian, "The Progress of Japan and the Samurai Class, 1868-1882" in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Aug., 1959), pp. 256-260.

⁹⁷ Robinson-Yamaguchi, "Expelling the Barbarian", p. 50.

⁹⁸ Sydney Cawcours, "The Tokugawa Period and Japan's Preparation for Modern Economic Growth" in *Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Autumn, 1974), pp. 115-117.

⁹⁹ In 1893 more than 3,000 silk factories used the traditional old-fashioned methods. Until 1914 systematic skilled training was inexistent and the state of metal and engineering industries is deemed as

light industrial production was underway but it heavily depended on machinery, pig iron, rolling stock and steel from abroad.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, the unequal treaties prohibited the raising of protective tariffs. Domestic economic growth policies and military armaments led naturally to budgetary deficits in the first years after the Restoration.¹⁰¹ Substantial state investments in industry and agriculture were effectuated when budgetary balance was restored in the mid-1880s and the needs of the military, the government's top priority, were met. The first "take off" of the Japanese economy occurred as a result of the preparations for the First Sino-Japanese War when shipbuilding, agricultural, arms and textiles' production faced foreign competition and finally abandoned the outmoded production methods. Despite the lack of convincing research and evidence, up to that moment someone could argue that the Restoration did not change radically the production process and the traditional economic ties centred on the village of the Tokugawa period. Economic subordination to foreign prerequisites meant that the Japanese economy was unstable and susceptible to economic fluctuations and western pressure. Despite the state's efforts many peasants were impoverished and most of the samurai (in the early Meiji period the samurai numbered 1,800,000 or 5% to 6% of the entire population according to Harry D. Harootunian's study)¹⁰² were unemployed. The lack of infrastructure and of reliable transportation network and the difficulty in introducing an integrated economic circuit hampered the states' efforts to recover economically after a two-year civil conflict.¹⁰³ The situation was exacerbated by the lack of raw materials and the reliance on imports for their provision. Not only machinery and specialized equipment were to be imported but also western industrialization methods.¹⁰⁴ In 1875, 527 foreign experts were employed by the Meiji government to help Japan set the foundations for its coveted economic development: 205 technical advisors, 144 instructors, 69 administrative directors and 36 specialized foreign workers.¹⁰⁵ The

"primitive" since until then the government and private sector alike lacked the funds and experience to administer large scale industrial plants. See Koji Taira, "Factory Labour and the Industrial Revolution in Japan" in *The Industrialization of Japan*, ed. W. J. Macpherson, (Padstow 1994), pp. 174-189.

¹⁰⁰ For instance 88,6% of the tonnage of the Imperial Navy during the period 1896-1910 was constructed abroad. See Peter Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895-1910*, (London-Berkeley, 1995), pp. 428-429.

¹⁰¹ Patrick, "External Equilibrium", p. 188.

¹⁰² Hosok O, *Cultural analysis of the early Japanese immigration to the United States during Meiji to Taisho era (1868--1926)*, Ph.D Dissertation, University of Oklahoma 2010, p. 78.

¹⁰³ Halliday, *Storia del Giappone Contemporaneo*, p.64.

¹⁰⁴ Except for the reactionary conservatives that systematically opposed the government's modernisation plan the Japanese people of the time demonstrated curiosity about the foreign methods and despite the scepticism high adaptability to a completely new social and economic system. The Chinese on the other hand failed to understand that western practises were the only ones that the West would accept in its relation with third parties. Self-efficiency, isolation and superstition did not have place in the modern world. See John E. Orchard, "Contrasts in the Progress of Industrialization in China and Japan" in *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (Mar., 1937), pp. 23- 31.

¹⁰⁵ Allen, *A Short History*, p. 34.

absence of sizable iron ores and the inefficient ways of coal extraction were not a good omen for a promising industrial development.¹⁰⁶

The Japanese inherent lack of iron was a by-product of: inadequacy of investigation methods, insufficient charcoal, high price of pig iron, unskilled labour force, lack of the appropriate equipment.¹⁰⁷ Until the founding of the Yawata Iron works in 1896, steel, a crucial material for the development of the nation's military and shipbuilding industry was manufactured at army arsenals and state run iron manufacturing plants without substantial results. The needs of the private sector were met by imports while the domestic production, limited as it was (1,200 tons in 1896), was dedicated to and absorbed by the military. In the 1890s Japan still imported pig iron mainly from Britain (12,000 tons in 1892, 44,000 tons in 1897).

These developments highlight two interesting aspects in regard to this research. Firstly, Japan did indeed suffer from a lack of raw materials, equipment and vital machinery in the first decades after the Restoration. Some limited industrial expansion was achieved only at the closing stages of the 19th century after a long period of failures, inefficiencies and vast imports from abroad. Accordingly, there was no established full scale industrial production in 1870s-1880s at home whose necessities for new markets and raw materials would justify expansionist views. Japan was still agrarian, barely moving towards industrialization (and that was largely because of its military forces) in need of stability, internal reorganization and investments at home. At the time it certainly did not approach the so-called highest stage of capitalism, reached by Britain and Germany, the one which is synonym of imperialism according to Lenin. In other words, raw materials and markets abroad were not necessary, not before the 1910s and 1920s,¹⁰⁸ when the take-off of the Japanese industry did actually occur. Secondly the state, after a reasonable delay, started to intervene as much as possible in order to secure the meagre sources of iron, coal and steel for military purposes, highlighting the close ties between the military and the government during the Meiji period. Indicatively by 1877 two thirds of the state's investments were absorbed by the military while in the 1880s this figure was reduced to one half.¹⁰⁹

Aiming to maintain order, safeguard national defence and promote unity a programme to improve the country's communications was launched. Educated citizenry, an industrial base, communications and transport networks were vital for the creation of a powerful modern army. The Ministers meeting on 14th November 1869 highlighted the benefits of the creation of a railway system to national wealth

¹⁰⁶ Hiroshi Saito, "The Natural Resources of Japan" in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 122 The Far East (Nov., 1925), pp. 96-97, pp. 96-99.

¹⁰⁷ Tang, "Technological leadership", p. 100.

¹⁰⁸ Gary R. Saxonhouse, "Productivity Change and Labor Absorption in Japanese Cotton Spinning 1891-1935" in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 91, No. 2 (May, 1977), p. 207.

¹⁰⁹ Richard J. Samuels, "Reinventing Security: Japan since Meiji" in *Daedalus*, Vol. 120, No. 4, Searching for Security in a Global Economy (Fall, 1991), pp. 15-16.

and development. Talks for a loan from London were delayed because some influential politicians and servicemen expressed reservations.¹¹⁰ The following years seven more lines were constructed for a total 505 miles and an invested amount of 21,650,000 yen in every part of the country. By 1872 Japan had introduced postal services with postal offices being erected both in China and Korea.¹¹¹

There are some scholars that reject the notion of early Japan's successful industrialization as an economic myth. This view is mostly justified from the shipbuilding sector. In any case the Japanese manufacturers before attempting to create iron vessels had to replace the traditional wooden sailing ships with wooden steamships. Several domains attempted to introduce western shipbuilding methods. By 1868 14 domains had built modern yards but the lack of expertise and machinery made the acquisition of vessels from the West easier and simpler.¹¹² During the entire 1879-1896 period, Japanese yards produced only three ships displacing more than 700 tons whereas foreign imports amounted to 174 ships of equivalent size. The Sino-Japanese war gave an unprecedented boost to many industrial sectors.¹¹³ During the 1850s and until the 1870s the sea lanes, the coastal trade and the entire foreign trade were completely in the hands of foreign firms. The American "Pacific Mail Steamship Company" had, until 1876, the domestic shipping monopoly. Up until the 1880s small Japanese companies were continuing to use sailing ships. Funds and technological improvement were needed in order for the sailing ships to be finally replaced with western style steamships. In the early Meiji period attempts were undertaken to construct modern naval facilities and refurbish the obsolete ones in Yokohama and Kōbe. Under these conditions and the everlasting lack of funds the government recognized the prudence of subsidizing just one larger private shipping company instead of several smaller ones. The government decided to challenge the western predominance by supporting the native Mitsubishi Company.¹¹⁴

The Meiji reformers put forward the establishment of a spiritual bond between the people and the Emperor who ruled under the protection of the spirits of ancestral emperors. The new leaders striving to endorse a new national identity, and at the same time consolidate their position and the people's unity and loyalty to the regime

¹¹⁰ The former argued that a railway was an unnecessary luxury and that the money should be invested on defence projects and more vital infrastructure whereas the latter stressed the capital's vulnerability if western troops were to use the line in case of war. It would be wiser to begin building in the more remote northern prefectures where the undertaking could contribute to the development of a backward area. See Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, pp. 355-356.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 354-358.

¹¹² Horie Yazuro, "The Economic Significance of the Meiji Restoration", in *Kyoto University Economic Review*, vol. 12, n. 2 (December 1937), pp. 67-68.

¹¹³ Regarding the shipbuilding industry, the government enforced the Navigation Encouragement Law on 1 October and the Shipbuilding Promotion Law on 24 March 1896. In 1898 alone more tonnage was built domestically than in the whole of the previous 20 years. See Seymour Broadbridge, "Shipbuilding and the State in Japan since the 1850s" in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol 11, No.4 (1977), pp. 601-605.

¹¹⁴ Fujii, *Japanese Culture in the Meiji Era*, pp. 212-216. For more see Peter N. Davies, "The Rise of Japan's Modern Shipping Industry" in *The Great Circle*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (April 1985), pp. 45-56.

encouraged the rituals, native traditions and mythological elements known generally as Shintō that emphasized on the unity of the religious worship with the political administration. Thus in the period from 1868 to 1871 the Meiji leaders started promoting Shintō as a state religion (State Shintō). Iwakura claimed that the state could remake Shintō to "unify the population through common worship of national deities". In 1872 the government promulgated the "Three Great Teachings", an ideological creed to reinforce its own control over society: Respect the gods; love the country, observe the principles of Heaven and the Way of Man; and revere the Emperor and obey to the will of the Court.¹¹⁵ These teachings brought about the creation of loyal subjects that would die for the country, pay taxes, comply with state decrees and would even excel in western science studies.

The promulgation of the Constitution (1889)¹¹⁶ and the Rescript on Education (1890), bolstered and popularized the concepts of national "policy" and reverence for the Emperor and became synonyms to the consolidation of the nation state.¹¹⁷ Indoctrination to nationalistic principles in schools was intensified during the term of Minister of Education Mori Arinori.¹¹⁸ Other key elements for forging the national identity and preserve the distinct Japanese essence were ethics training at school,

¹¹⁵ Fumiko Fukase-Indergaard and Michael Indergaard, "Religious Nationalism and the Making of the Modern Japanese State", in *Theory and Society*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Aug., 2008), pp. 356-360.

¹¹⁶ After meticulous studies and various proposals throughout this period the Prussian style constitutional monarchy model was chosen as the most suitable to Japanese political necessities. It was a conscious choice by the conservative Meiji leader eager to silence liberal and democratic opposition. On 11 February 1889 the Constitution of Japan, which proclaimed the Emperor to be "sacred and inviolable" and "the head of the Empire, combining in himself the rights of sovereignty" was promulgated. It came into effect on 29 November 1890. An Imperial Diet, the new representative assembly was also founded. The Constitution was a clear-cut declaration of the nation's qualification and determination to join the ranks of the "civilized" world. The new western style cabinet was independent of the diet. The latter was composed of an elected House of Representatives and a House of Peers of nobles and court members. Ministers were appointed by the Emperor, and were responsible to him, individually and collectively. Later on, however, it became customary for the cabinet to be formed by political parties. Executive, legislative and judicial branches were all presided by the Emperor. Judicial power was independent; the power to dismiss or appoint judges was in the hands of the Minister of Justice. The Emperor became also Commander-in-Chief of the Army and the Navy. See Sydney Giffard, *Japan Among the Powers, 1890-1990*, (New Haven 1994), pp. 12-13.

¹¹⁷ In ancient Japan the early emperors (4th century AD) were considered human beings with the ability to communicate with the deities, shamans but not themselves divine. Their spiritual authority rested on their power to rejuvenate nature and guarantee rice crops as the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, the oldest Japanese chronicles (8th century AD), reveal. The transformation of the emperor to a deity was based on the Meiji leaders' perception of national interest and the influence that western monarchy models exerted on the native imperial system. His image was constructed, manipulated and exploited by the ruling classes since 1868. Through the constitution two more innovations were introduced: the people became loyal imperial subjects and the Emperor Commander-in-Chief of the Army and the Navy; the Emperor appeared in military uniform, decorated by medals to convey an image of prestigious and authoritative rule but also to raise the peoples' morale. See Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, "The Emperor of Japan as Deity (Kami)", in *Ethnology*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (Jul., 1991), p. 202-205.

¹¹⁸ Shimazono Susumu, Regan E. Murphy, "State Shinto in the Lives of the People: The Establishment of Emperor Worship, Modern Nationalism, and Shrine Shinto in Late Meiji" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1, Helen Hardacre and the Study of Japanese Religion (2009), pp. 99-101, pp. 93-124.

national holidays that celebrated historical anniversaries¹¹⁹ and the exaltation of the distinctiveness, the patriotism and the sense of one's duty to the imperial state.¹²⁰ Western knowledge was promoted and in the same time the exaltation of the "family state",¹²¹ the concept of a unique people with common origin headed by the throne, took place mixing rationalism and science with metaphysical didactic folklore.¹²² Mori stated: "Our country must move from its third-class position to second-class, and from second-class to first; and ultimately to the leading position among all countries of the world. The best way to do this is [by laying] the foundations of elementary education".¹²³ In 1900 the Ministry announced that Japanese history lectures should concentrate on the unbreakable lineage of the Imperial Dynasty. Around that time the previously implemented American model of education was substituted by the more nation centred conservative German (Herbartian pedagogy).¹²⁴ Glorification of patriotic duty and the worship of the ancestors was exalted through the establishment of the famous Yasukuni shrine in 1869, which commemorates up to this day the Japanese fallen in the service of the empire.

Meiji leaders promoted the endorsement of foreign models as signs of civilization and modernisation. Modernisation meant Westernization and that could only be achieved by foreign assistance.¹²⁵ By adopting western law, technology, industry, education, finance and administrative systems Japan could eventually annul the hated unequal treaties and reach a level of apparent parity with the nations that from the visit of Perry on regarded it as savage and undeveloped. The popular Meiji slogan "rich country-strong army" reveals the reasoning of its leaders for Japan to maximise its chances of maintaining its independence; the Chinese example and the initial fear of foreign attack certainly contributed to this view. Therefore, the navy was modelled on the British; the army first on the French and then on the German; education on the French, American and German; communications on the British; police on the French; banking on the American and Belgian; legal system first on the

¹¹⁹ Brij Tanhka, *Kita Ikki and the making of Modern Japan. A Vision of Empire*, (Folkestone, 2006), p.40.

¹²⁰ Wilbur M. Fridell, "The Establishment of Shrine Shinto in Meiji Japan" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 2/3 (Jun.-Sep., 1975), p. 138, pp. 137-168.

¹²¹ In this sense the Emperor, the progenitor ancestor of the nation, serves the same role for the country that the family head serves for the family, see Kosaka Masaaki, *Japanese Culture in the Meiji Era. Volume IX. Thought*, (Tokyo 1958), pp. 385-386.

¹²² The importance of ethics and state Shintō and the notions of "national essence" and family state in the 19th and 20th centuries were distinctively Japanese ideas. Some historians though claim that corresponding examples can be traced in the Fascist and Nazi regimes *mutatis mutandis*. For more see Paul Brooker, *The Faces of Fraternalism. Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Imperial Japan*, (Oxford 1991), pp. 207-215.

¹²³ Masako Shibata, "Controlling national identity and reshaping the role of education: the vision of state formation in Meiji Japan and the German Kaiserreich" in *History of Education*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (Jan. 2004), pp. 77-78.

¹²⁴ Ichiro Nishikawa, "Il sistema scolastico, fattore decisivo della modernizzazione" in *L'ascesa del Giappone*, ed. E. C. Pischel, S. Pigrucci, (Milan 1994), pp. 190-192.

¹²⁵ Paolo Beonio-Brocchieri, *Religiosità e ideologia alle origini del Giappone moderno*, (Bologna 1993), p. 7.

French model and then on the German. Emulation of the most efficient advanced patterns was common between the interconnected modern states in the 19th century. Other states such as Switzerland and Italy contributed to the Japanese cause not by sharing models for its institutions but by dispatching officials and employees.¹²⁶

The Meiji government maintained the ban on Christianity until February 1873. The Japanese-Dutch treaty of 1857 and the Japanese-American of 1858 recognized freedom of religion to the Dutch and Americans residing in Japan but made no mention to the Japanese followers of Christianity. The Iwakura mission received a lot of complaints during its visit in the US and Europe for its religious intolerance. Religious freedom had been proclaimed both in the February 1873 and later in the 1889 Constitution.¹²⁷

Rising nationalism and religious fervour were key factors for the nation's aggrandizement. Another institution and a main pillar of the later Japanese expansionist aspirations was the national military forces. The absence of an imperial army was the actual reason of the court's marginalization by the warlords for centuries. Through the creation of a modern army, imperial authority would be respected, loyalty ensured and internal order preserved. The creation of an imperial army was a crucial step towards centralization. The difficult financial situation of the throne as a result of the anti-Tokugawa campaign signified its economic dependence by its supporters and the wealthy merchants; it also meant that military reformation had to be postponed for the moment. Ōmura Masujirō (1824-1869), the court's Vice Minister of military affairs suggested in June 1869 that the government's

¹²⁶ Eleanor Westney, *Imitation and Innovation. The Transfer of Western Organizational Patterns to Meiji Japan*, (London, 1987), pp. 2-14. In the 1870s and 1880s 38% of the foreign instructors were German, the largest group. See Mark Anderson, *Japan and the Specter of Imperialism*, (New York, 2009), p. 158.

¹²⁷ The Meiji government accepted in principle the toleration of the Christian faith in 1873. The prosecution campaigns were abandoned due to the fear of the Western powers' reaction and interference while the regime was still hanging in the balance. See *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85. In a letter dated 12 September 1885 the Pope Leo XII exalted the modernisation efforts and the religious liberty of Meiji Japan. According to the French Ambassador Sienkiewicz (Joseph Adam Sienkiewicz 1836-?), these two elements would "contribute to making Japan rank among the Western Powers". On this occasion the French diplomat hailed the first step towards the spread of Catholicism in Japan, an event that would enhance French influence in the country. The French religious-spiritual protectorate had been in existence since the 1860 treaty with China and extended to every catholic missionary activity in the East. The Pope, as has been seen, awarded this special privilege to Paris despite the discontent of the other Powers, in particularly Italy's and Germany's. See *Ibid.*, p. 199. The actual situation of the French spiritual protectorate seemed favourable to the Japanese government since only a small percentage of the population had converted to Catholicism; the arrival of a nuncio (Vatican's direct representative) could possibly lead to a revival of a long feared religious zeal. Paris maintained its privileged position and tried to make the most out of it. Quai d'Orsay, in September 1899 demanded more information from Sienkiewicz since "it seems to be feared in the Vatican that Russian Orthodoxy may succeed in having itself adopted by the Mikado's Government: thus the Pontifical Court is extremely desirous that we exert ourselves to outdistancing rival confessions and bringing about the triumph of Catholicism". See, *Ibid.*, pp. 201-204. As strange as it may appear these "fears" were valid. Due to the missionary work of the Russian Archbishop Father Nicolai (Ivan Dmitrievich Kasatkin 1836-1912) in the second half of the 19th century more than 10,000 Japanese were baptized Christian Orthodox around 1885 and a cathedral was erected in 1891 in Tōkyō. For more see Dixon, "Russia and Japan", p. 14.

independence and authority passed through the abolition of the domains, feudal armies and the warrior class. For a decade after 1868 there was no actual separation between military and civil services; Ōkubo Toshimichi, Minister of Home Affairs from 1873 to 1878, which was a civilian position, was in command of the military in the same time.¹²⁸ The threat that devoured China¹²⁹ could be eradicated by the advent of modernised, well equipped and trained national forces. With this in mind four major arsenals and three government shipyards were founded within the first 10 years after the Restoration. Two of the arsenals for the Army were situated in Tōkyō (1877) and Ōsaka (1870) and were operated initially by foreign experts. The Navy's, erected in Yokosuka (1866) and Tsukiji (1874), were facing substantial challenges due to the lack of iron, machinery, skilled labour and experience.¹³⁰ Later, in the 1880s, to reduce the dependence on imported materials such as steel the Army sought to directly manage mines and factories and pressed hard for the country's industrialization.¹³¹

In August 1870 Saigō Tsugumichi and Yamagata Aritomo¹³² (1838-1922) returned after a tour in Europe where they had observed the military institutions of the Western powers. They were both entrusted with important positions in the Bureau of Naval and Military Affairs but they could not agree on the model to be followed. Ōmura had proposed an army following the French paradigm and a navy modelled

¹²⁸ Chitoshi Yanaga, "The Military and Government in Japan" in *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (Jun., 1941), p. 530.

¹²⁹ The Russian danger in the North, the British in the South and the pressures from Germany, France and the US resembled Poland's encirclement from the hostile powers that finally dismantled it in 1772, 1793, 1795. A Japanese traveller in East Europe published the unfamiliar story in the *Japan Weekly Mail* in 1873 after his return in Japan. He was amazed about the cynicism with which the Western powers dissolved a fellow great kingdom and was terrified for his homeland future. See George Z. F. Bereday, "A Japanese View on the Partitions of Poland" in *The Polish Review*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (1974), pp. 89-90.

¹³⁰ The natal year of the modern Japanese Navy was 1855 when the Bakufu requested aid and training in tactics, shipbuilding and navigation from Dutch naval officers in Nagasaki. In 1867 the first British instructor arrived and in 1869 the first naval training school under the British admiral Archibald Lucius Douglas (1842-1913) was founded in Tsukiji. In 1873 the Navy consisted of 17 ships for a total of 18,000 tons while in 1895, as a result for the preparations for the imminent Sino-Japanese war there were 28 ships of 57,600 tons and 24 torpedo boats, the majority of which were constructed abroad. See Chitoshi Yanaga, *Japan since Perry*, (New York, London, 1949), pp. 116-117.

¹³¹ Kozo Yamamura, "Success Ill-gotten? The Role of Meiji Militarism in Japan's Technological Progress", in *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 37, No. 1 *The Tasks of Economic History* (Mar., 1977), pp. 114-115, 118.

¹³² Yamagata Aritomo served in many capacities; as Prime Minister (1889-1891, 1898-1900), as statesman behind the scenes, as field marshal, or as the president of the Privy Council, he shaped Japanese politics to an unprecedented degree. Working intensively against the parties and the parliament and in particular against Itō Hirobumi he favoured the military cast and by extension Japan's authoritarianism and military expansion. He was appointed Chief of the Army's General Staff in 1878-1882, 1884-85 and 1904-1905.

after the British, a plan accepted by Saigō and others.¹³³ Yamagata favoured the Prussian conscription system instead. However, the clans and many former retainers of the shogun were more familiar with the French model and language. On 2 October 1870 the government announced the adoption of the French system and the hiring of French military consultants. According to the new organization, recruits would be trained in Ōsaka and then assigned to the Tōkyō, Tōhokou, Ōsaka and Chinsai garrison districts.¹³⁴ This first national army suffered from both the lack of funds and the lack of officers trained to the modern methods, as did the navy. Another necessary step towards the consolidation of the national conscription system was the abolition of the domains. Worried about the political consequences and constant peasant uprisings, Ōkubo, at the head of the all-powerful Home Ministry, demanded more funding for the military whereas the Finance Minister Shibusawa Eiichi, (1840-1931) warned that excessive investment to military programmes would lead the country into debt. Income, he advised, should be invested to more crucial sectors.¹³⁵ The Ministry was divided in the Army and the Navy Departments until 1872 when two separate Ministries were established. The conscription law was announced on 28 November 1872 and came into effect the following year.¹³⁶

In February 1874 the Meiji leaders were confronted with perhaps the gravest threat to their rule when the former statesman Etō Shimpei (1834-1874) led the Saga rebellion. His death in April 1874 ended a potentially dangerous situation; the new national army acted as a "counterrevolutionary police force" according to the historian Kublin Hyman. Tōkyō's policies against the former warrior class and its westernization agenda largely provoked the so-called Satsuma rebellion in January 1877 led by Saigō. Despite its victory, Tōkyō, acknowledged its flaws and realized

¹³³ In 1872 16 French officers arrived in Japan although many lamented the high costs and the previous French-Bakufu connections. See Eleanor Westney, *"The Military" in Japan in Transition. From Tokugawa to Meiji*, ed. M. B. Jansen, G. Roznan, (Princeton, 1986), p. 178, pp. 169-194.

¹³⁴ Starting from 1874 Tōkyō started dispatching recruits to Hokkaidō in order to help with the development projects and of course defend the island against a possible Russian attack. They were called Tondenhei (military colonists) and they were later followed by civilians seeking to cultivate and protect the land under extreme climatic conditions. The politician Kuroda Kiyotaka (1840-1900) initially proposed the project in order to appease the disappointed ex-samurai. The government supplied these men with transportation to the island, tools, housing for them and their families and firearms. They were organized in military settlements and provided approximately 3,500 active soldiers and 1,000 in reserve. See *Ibid.*, pp. 182-183.

¹³⁵ Hyman Kublin, "The Modern Army of Early Meiji Japan" in *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Nov., 1949), pp. 30-31.

¹³⁶ Many officials and commoners did not approve this western style innovation. The samurai were unwilling to share their profession with the common people and argued that the peasants, without trace of military tradition or of warrior ethics were not capable to defend the empire. The peasant families on the other side were complaining that the new measure was taking away their sons, rendering them unable to contribute to the families' agrarian activities for long periods of time. The Navy and Army continued to accept samurai volunteers. The French model of army training and organization was followed, while the German one was preferred for the conscription system. The highly regarded German mass conscription system had worked wonders in the Franco-Prussian war. These measures produced a standing army of 31,680 men. In case of war they would increase to 46,350. See Gotaro Ogawa, *The Conscription system in Japan*, (New York, 1921), pp. 17-18, 226.

the operational limitations of its modern army. After all it had to deploy its entire fighting force at the time, numbering 65,000 soldiers, sailors and policemen in order to come out victorious. The rebellion resulted in the destruction of a great part of the modern army, and the collapse of government services with finances stretched to the limit.¹³⁷ Meiji leaders came to realise that greater (financial) efforts were required in order to construct a modern and effective fighting force.

A French military mission did remain in Japan up until 1880 although its influence waned.¹³⁸ On 5 December 1878 an autonomous General Staff for the Army,¹³⁹ reporting directly to the Emperor was inaugurated. It was followed by the Japanese Army War College in 1883 that was to train staff officers after the German successful paradigm. The establishment of the General Staff signified the separation of the military command from general state administration. In 1889 the Imperial ordinance n. 135 rendered the military independent from the government in military functions "of non-administrative nature".¹⁴⁰ Katsura Tarō (1848-1913) the military attaché in Berlin and Yamagata's protégé used his influence to further align the Japanese military system to the German one. From the beginning of the 1880s the Emperor attended the Army's and Navy's graduation ceremonies and repeatedly made contributions for the state to acquire armaments and warships since the government had to deal with financial strains. In addition, many members of the imperial family were regularly enlisted for military service. The Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors, issued on 4 January 1882, was a draft on ethics based on the ancient warrior's code (Bushidō). It highlighted the military's importance to Japanese society and its bond with the Court. The Rescript stressed the notion of nationalism and loyalty not to the government but to the Emperor; elevated even further the privileged status of the military in the state; rendered it immune to restrictions by other state organisations; isolated members of the military from the political system by prohibiting individual political activities.

¹³⁷ The Navy suffered accordingly. The first Japanese built warship after the Restoration was finished in 1876. Since the purchase of warships was remarkably expensive the government ordered only 6 until 1886 despite the pleas of the still few Navy officers. Clan rivalries and lack of skilled officials made the Navy Ministry politically weak. Until the 1890s the Navy was bought from abroad not built. This is why it did not contribute significantly to the development of the shipbuilding industry in the 1870s and 1880s. See Westney, "The Military", pp. 181-182, p. 192.

¹³⁸ The French did not take this insult lightly. When in 1885 and 1888 the Meiji government invited German instructors the French Legation lodged two bitter official protests. French pretentiousness weighted upon diplomatic relations. Hara Takeshi (1856-1921) first secretary to the embassy of Japan in Paris confessed in January 1889 that "relations between Japan and France are in complete disharmony". See Takii, *The Meiji Constitution*, pp. 110-112.

¹³⁹ The Navy did not follow the Army's example and continued to be controlled by the Navy Ministry. In 1886, nonetheless, a Joint General Staff was created and two years later under its supervision two separate General Staffs were established. In 1893 the Navy General Staff became practically independent, like its Army equivalent. See Westney, "The Military", pp. 191-192.

¹⁴⁰ Military and naval operations, strategy, organization and training fell into the Supreme command's authority. Nevertheless, the government still regulated mobilization of the troops, proclamation of martial law, provisions, appointment or dismissal of military personnel. See Yanaga, "The Military and the Government", pp. 530- 531.

In 1881 the secret military police (Kempeitai) was founded. In the 1880s the influence of the military drastically increased in the government members of the military were appointed to ministerial positions. From 1868 to 1912 45% of civilian cabinet posts were held by military officers.¹⁴¹ In 1886 military training was made mandatory to schools. Furthermore, the military's appeal to the Japanese people should not be underestimated: the ancient ideals of Bushidō: loyalty, benevolence, justice and a martial and feudal tradition spanning almost seven centuries bound together emotionally the Army, the Navy and general public.¹⁴² Enjoying this kind of unconditional support, military leaders became progressively more audacious. In times of political instability, in February 1892 for example, the Army and Navy Ministers were ready to suspend the constitution. When the Cabinet opposed a military armaments expansion bill it was dissolved in 1891.

The relations of the new backward state with the advanced civilized nations were largely dictated by the norms of the Western imperialism. Western disposition towards Japan was characterized by opportunistic, intrusive, dogmatic and menacing attitudes usually supplemented by a disdain for the oriental barbarians. This disposition, that arguably offended the Japanese public and ruling class, can be traced in the signing and the long and protracted revision process of the predatory unequal treaties. Let us briefly examine early Japan's foreign relations.

The outbreak of the Franco-Prussian (1870-1871) provided a welcome relief for Tōkyō. The two powers would exercise generally less pressure and would inevitably drop the issue of the Christians' prosecution in particular. The war also demonstrated that the government was still unable to enforce its own independent foreign policy and force the Powers to respect its lawful sovereign rights. The German Minister von Brand asked for Japan's neutrality on 18 August 1870 and Outrey supported this idea in his report to Paris four days later: "...the extreme importance of showing to the Chinese, as to the Japanese, that, even in a state of war the European Powers will be always ready to unite in action to protect European interests in the two countries". On 22 August the Japanese government declared its neutrality with, according to Parkes, the very first state paper of the kind. No hostile engagement in Japanese home waters or within a distance of seven and a half miles was permitted and the warships that were to seek safe haven would be allowed to have a day's head start when they left port. Outrey was not satisfied and a second document was prepared. This one was accepted by both sides initially but later von Brandt demanded a similar clause for merchant ships. The Japanese government complied with this request and drafted the complementary articles only to revoke them on 16 October 1870 due to Outrey's pressures. This incident demonstrates the diplomatic isolation and subordination of the still weak, unstable, intimidated Meiji government to foreign demands. Submissiveness to any Western whim, no matter how excessive it may have been, was frustrating but necessary at the time. Concessions in a stoical manner and

¹⁴¹ Westney, "The Military", pp. 189-191

¹⁴² Yanaga, "The Military and the Government", pp. 531.

politico-economical sacrifices had to be made as long as the country was still lagging behind militarily to the West, and trying to consolidate its territorial integrity. That was the way chosen to achieve a future position of international parity.¹⁴³

Britain was the power to be feared due to its naval might and invasive capitalistic economy. At the same time, the example of an isolated island state lacking resources that imposed its will upon millions of people and controlled vast territories was appealing to those early 19th century Japanese scholars, who rejected xenophobia and seclusion. Britain appeared to be the greatest threat but simultaneously a nation to emulate and admire. Honda Toshiaki in 1798 proposed modernisation measures that would make comparable the "great island of Japan in the East" with "the island of England in the West... two most wealthy and powerful nations".¹⁴⁴ On 21 January 1862 a forty men delegation under Takenouchi Yasunori (1806-?), visited Europe. The scholar Watanabe Kazan in his widespread pamphlet "The Story of a Dream" expressed his admiration for the British Empire that controlled vast territories with its "25,000 ships and one million sailors" all over the world.¹⁴⁵ Undeniably the most attractive British concepts were industrialization, empire building and naval superiority. The last two notions were underlined by the naval engineer Katsu Kaishū (1823-1899), who acknowledged the importance of creating a modern navy as means for Japan to establish its rightful place among the nations: By adopting the British paradigm of naval superiority, Japan would defend its sovereign rights from the Russian menace.¹⁴⁶ Moreover it would conquer Korea and East China thus creating a great continental empire. Katsu proposed the founding of naval training schools where students would be taught English and navigation by British tutors and instructors. The new government adopted many of these proposals.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ Ibid., pp. 111-113.

¹⁴⁴ W. G. Beasley, "The Edo Experience and Japanese Nationalism" in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 4, Special Issue: Edo Culture and Its Modern Legacy (1984), p. 562.

¹⁴⁵ Beasley, *Great Britain and the Opening of Japan*, p. 34.

¹⁴⁶ Parkes both shared and partially incited Tōkyō's preoccupation of the Russian expansion in the Far East. In early 1868 Admiral Keppel returned from his surveying mission in the maritime Siberian provinces having gathered information on the Russian capture of Kunashiri in the Kurile Islands. Parkes, greatly preoccupied by the eventuality of a Russian expansion in the Sakhalin and Hokkaido, instructed the Meiji government to open a port in the northern part of Hokkaido. Western economic interests in Hokkaido would hamper any Russian aspirations for the island but the Japanese did not follow his advice. British fears were heightened by similar rumours stemming from the French authorities. Parkes as a counter measure asked from the Foreign Office consent for the occupation of the Hamilton island (Geomun-do) of the Korean coast and its use as a naval base. On 4 August 1875 Admiral Charles Frederick Alexander Shadwell, (1814-1886) acknowledged the value of this acquisition but the Foreign Office rejected the request as it was unwilling to set an example of partition in the Far East. In any case there was no evidence of Russian activity in Korea, and in particular in Port Lazarev (Wōnsan) for that matter. Despite the lack of concrete proof Parkes was monitoring the activities of Russian vessels in the Japanese ports with suspicion, warned the Governor of Hong Kong of the danger of a Russian attack and suggested the creation of a British naval base in Hokkaidō. See Daniels, *Sir Harry Parkes*, p. 89, 168-170.

¹⁴⁷ Fox, *Britain and Japan*, pp. 257-268.

Let's return to the unequal treaties. In the turn of the century Tōkyō finally annulled the principle of extraterritoriality with the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of July 16 1894. It was at last an equal treaty with trade rights and a mutual most favoured nation clause but Japan was still subject to customs rates on most of the products imported from Britain. Tariff autonomy would be restored as late as 1911.¹⁴⁸ The second state to follow was the U.S and the third Italy on December 1 1894.¹⁴⁹ Hereafter similar agreements were signed with the other Powers making Japan the first politically equal country to the West.¹⁵⁰ 41 years of frustrating negotiations, long deliberations, demeaning refusals, racist attitudes, unfounded prejudices, unsettling marginalization, had passed in search of parity. Tōkyō to achieve this parity even resorted to the imperialistic scheming that it itself had been subjected to. Increasing its influence over Asia and imitating the powers' actions it strived to prove that it was socially, military, economically mature enough to be admitted in their circle.¹⁵¹ Search for security, independence and an equal standing had been an endless, psychologically haunting experience for the Japanese. It naturally led to aggressive, anti-foreign impulses that were to be manifested later on, when Japan actually was in position to challenge the West. At the end of the 19th century the Japanese state was equal from the judicial point of view and was even admired for its modernization efforts and military victories at times. Nevertheless, racism and theories about the yellow peril did not cease in 1899; on the contrary they were at their apex. Persisting racist notions about the white race's supremacy, civilizing mission, paternalistic philanthropy to Asians and Africans placed Japan yet again in a position of inferiority, despite its phenomenal efforts. In the early 20th century in California and elsewhere anti-Japanese immigration legislation was enacted. In the 1919 Paris conference that brought an end to the First World War the Japanese demands for racial equality were frustratingly ignored by their fellow victors. Japan remained imprisoned in an inferior Orient amidst a West dominated world order. This fact gave rise to the creation of a siege mentality that led from fear and respect for the West to eventual resentment. As it will be seen Japan had to choose to collaborate with the oriental nations in the face of Western imperialism or "leave Asia", entering the Western camp and adopting its doctrine of expansion.

¹⁴⁸ Ian Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy, 1869-1942: Kasumigaseki to Miyakezaka*, (London-Henley-Boston, 1977), p. 50. On February 21 1911 the treaty of Commerce with the US restored Japan's tariff autonomy but with a catch; Japanese immigration to the US had to be restricted. See Shumpei Okamoto, "Meiji Imperialism: Pacific Emigration or Continental Expansion" in *Japan Examined: Perspectives on Modern Japanese History*, ed. H. Wray, H. Conroy, (Honolulu, 1983), pp. 141-142.

¹⁴⁹ The treaty was signed in Rome between Foreign Minister Blank and the Japanese ambassador Kogorō. Rome always displayed sympathy for Japan's plea for equality. See Luigi Vanutelli, "Le Capitolazioni al Giappone (1854-1899)" in *La Rassegna Nazionale*, Vol. 146 (1905), pp. 581-585.

¹⁵⁰ Hikomatsu Kamikawa, *Japan-American Diplomatic Relations in the Meiji-Taisho Era*, (Tokyo 1958), pp. 150-155.

¹⁵¹ Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism*, pp. 195-200.

9. The Japanese imperial tradition, colonial theories and the first exploration missions

In this chapter the ideologies, overseas activities, and trends behind the first Japanese colonialism will be presented. The immigration issue, Japan's historical legacy, invented traditions, colonial doctrines, influential theories and some exploration missions, seemed to justify for some Japan's territorial expansion. All these factors however, were not essential but only complementary for the shaping of a colonial disposition. Since they were employed by some pro-colonial politicians, popular publicists and pressure groups to convince an even broader portion of Japan's society that control of foreign territories would contribute to the nation's development we have to examine them. Overpopulation, economic considerations, and constructed imaginaries were not the main stimuli behind Tōkyō's early bid for colonies; international diplomacy and the quest for respect were infinitely more decisive.

Fukuzawa promoted "Datsua Nyūō" theory, literally translated as "leave Asia and join the West" or commonly known as "Datsuaron" ("On Leaving Asia") in his *Jiji Shimpō* editorial on 16 March 1885: "We do not have time to wait for the enlightenment of our neighbours so that we can work together toward the development of Asia. It is better for us to leave the ranks of Asian nations and cast our lot with civilized nations of the West. As for the way of dealing with China and Korea, no special treatment is necessary just because they happen to be our neighbours. We simply follow the manner of the Westerners in knowing how to treat them. Any person who cherishes a bad friend cannot escape his bad notoriety. We simply erase from our minds our bad friends in Asia".¹ Fukuzawa's influential theory, whichever way he meant it, encouraged Japanese nationalism and imperialism and served as a justification theory for the Japanese colonialism in Asia until 1945. Fukuzawa full of contempt for the "hopelessly backward" Asian nations compared to the westernizing Japan advocated the disruption of the cultural ties with Korea and China and the adoption of West's attitude towards these states.² Instead of solidarity

¹ Hosok O, *Cultural analysis of the early Japanese immigration to the United States during Meiji to Taisho era (1868--1926)*, Ph.D Dissertation, University of Oklahoma 2010, p. 82.

² Some scholars based on an 1895 article of Fukuzawa, in which he suggested leniency towards the defeated and thereafter non-threatening Chinese, recognized him as a moderate intellectual. For many historians, such as Yasukawa Junosuke, however, Fukuzawa's theories guided Japan in all its wars against its neighbours. In particular, his "leaving Asia", "discarding Asia", "escaping from Asia" approach that associated Asia with backwardness, stagnation and subjugation to the West is perceived as the groundwork behind Japanese contempt, colonialism and the invasion of Asian countries. In contrast to Tōkichi Tarui (1850–1922), who in his Great Eastern Unification Argument in 1885 proposed the unification of Korea and Japan against the Europeans, the author Hinohara Shōzō recommended the establishment of a Leave Asia Society (Datsu-A Kai). He published his idea in 1884 in the newspaper *JiJi Shimpō*. See Pekka Korhonen, "Leaving Asia? The Meaning of Datsu-A and Japan's Modern History" in *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 11, Issue 50, No. 1 (Dec 2013), pp. 3-12. For more on Tarui's political thoughts and activities see Kyu Hyun Kim, "Tarui Tōkichi's Arguments

and cooperation with China, Japan, albeit belatedly, should have joined the Powers in carving spheres of influence and colonizing the East. By putting his high literary skills to work he greatly influenced and persuaded his contemporaries to seek an aggressive policy of expansion.

He also viewed Japanese communities abroad as an extension of Japan proper and encouraged the immigrants to build Shintō and Buddhist temples and preserve their language and customs. These immigrants would lift Japanese prestige abroad as well as stimulate commercial activity and economic development at home. Tōkyō for its part had to protect them and establish frequent long distance sea lanes. Japanese immigrants wherever they settled, had to contribute to the motherland's development, get accustomed with modern technologies and gain respect by attaining a distinguished status among the civilized nations of the world. Using the Anglo-Saxon type of colonization through migration as a model, Fukuzawa, proposed overseas agricultural settlements as a means of achieving commercial competitiveness. Thus, excess Japanese population³ ought to settle to areas and acquire land still free of European domination.⁴ For Fukuzawa America, with its abundant natural resources and enterprising society, also offered great opportunities as a market for Japanese commodities. Along these lines the businessman Mutō Sanji (1867-1934) identified working abroad and sending remittances back home as a patriotic duty equal to paying taxes or fighting a war.⁵ The journalist Tokutomi Sohō (1863-1957) asserted that if Japan was to have influence in the world then it had to "develop a policy to motivate our people to embark upon great adventure abroad...". For Tokutomi colonization and immigration could provide a solution to Japan's overpopulation problem and could cultivate Japanese ingenuity and enterprise. In 1890 convinced that "all great nation[s] of the world are expanding" he wrote about a "Greater Japan". National expansion was to be achieved by peaceful means, trade and immigration "which ultimately would lead to colonization".⁶

For many influential intellectuals, immigration would stimulate commercial activity and maritime industry and additionally it would settle the internal

on Behalf of the Union of the Great East, 1893" in *Pan Asianism: A Documentary History, Vol. 1, 1850—1920*, ed. S. Saaler, C. W. A. Szpilman, (Boulder, New York, 2011), pp. 73-83.

³ In an 1896 article he calculated an annual population increase of almost 400,000 from 1874 to 1884 and commented: "On the one hand, Japan's territory is limited, and on the other hand, the population grows in such a rapid speed. Under this situation, sooner or later the population will reach the quantitative limit and stop reproducing". Therefore, Japan had to follow Britain's paradigm and capture regions of Asia, Africa and America to direct its immigrant flows. See Sindey Xu Lu, *Diasporic Imperialism: Japan's Asia-Pacific Migrations and the making of the Japanese Empire, 1868-1945*, Ph.D Dissertation University of Pennsylvania (2013), pp. 33-35.

⁴ Bill Mihalopoulos, "An Exercise in Good Government: Fukuzawa Yukichi on Emigration and Nation-Building" in *The Journal of Northeast Asian History*, Vol. 9 No. 1 (Summer 2012), pp. 20-22.

⁵ Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America*, (Oxford, 2005), p. 20.

⁶ Joanne Marie Lloyd, *"Yankees of the Orient": Yamato and Japanese immigration to America*, Masters Dissertation, Florida Atlantic University, 1990, pp. 39-42.

socioeconomic problems. The widespread Malthusian theory of population added another incentive for the Japanese to immigrate. After the 17th century the population of Japan had increased by at least 2.6 times, if not 3.9 times over a 120-year period according to the historian Hayami Akira. The Meiji government encouraged immigration to maintain social order, lessening the social and political unrest within the country. Vulnerable and unstable in its first steps it used this "safety valve" to channel abroad the discontent of former samurai and peasants, avoiding potentially disastrous uprisings. The demoted, impoverished samurai class hit by the abolition of stipends, overpopulation, and unemployment, had in many cases resorted to banditry. The pro-tokugawa clans, namely the Aizu, that fought the imperial forces until the end during the civil war were considered by Tōkyō as traitors and were treated with utmost severity.⁷ Similarly the peasants, strained by the new land tax passed in 1873 and Matsukata's deflation measures (1881-1885), were suffering from the downfall of rice, silk and cotton prices and the rise of tenancy rates. Rural families were selling their daughters and some of them turned to prostitution at home and abroad.⁸ Poor and landless men in their most productive ages (14-35) abandoned mainly the southern Japanese prefectures, the more agrarian-underdeveloped of the country, to seek their fortune overseas.⁹ Besides economic factors, the disappointment of those who nurtured hopes for a new liberal Japan after the Restoration and could not stand the conservative, authoritarian central regime, provided another motive to immigrate. Nationalistic ideas (Kokutai), religious reverence to the Emperor and unquestionable obedience, promoted by formal acts such as the 1890 Imperial Rescript on Education and the 1887 Peace Preservation Regulations, seemed to strangle any opposing voice. Young men that had espoused liberal-democratic ideas, western science and even

⁷ O, *Cultural analysis*, pp. 124-131, 66-67. The Aizu clan was stigmatized as traitorous by the rival clans that had prevailed in the 1868-1869 Boshin War. The four main victorious clans, especially the Satsuma and the Chōshū (Satchō Alliance) in their effort to retain and monopolize power, utilized the Emperor's image to legitimize their actions and rule. In this case, they dubbed a clan hostile to their newfound authority as "disloyal to the Emperor". See Donald Calman, *The Nature and Origins of Japanese Imperialism: A Reinterpretation of the Great Crisis of 1873*, (London-New York, 1992), p. 244. For Calman the Restoration is just an usurpation or a transfer of power from the Shōgun to the pro-western clans that promptly sought to eliminate their political rivals. In a relatively short amount of time, as already seen in the previous chapter, the Satchō oligarchy de facto controlled the most crucial government and army branches, a fact that is reflected by the discontent of the liberals and of the masses in general with the exception of the privileged few. Calman though goes a step further in asserting that Satchō systematically wiped out the opposition and promoted solely the political and commercial interests of its clan members and protégés in parts of Japan and Asia, disguised as acts of patriotism, prosperity and modernity from 1868 until 1945. According to Calman the economic interests and commercial aspirations of the Tosa, Satsuma, Chōshū and Hizen (Saga) clans in Northern Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia and China, explain the birth and evolution of the modern Japanese imperialism. In other words, this clique above the law envisioned and carried out ruthlessly a meticulously outlined plan of colonial domination, firstly by subjugating their fellow countrymen, after they had consolidated their status by silencing the domestic opposition, then by exploiting Japan's periphery and lastly by advocating a plan of world conquest that led to the Second World War.

⁸ Mihalopoulos, "An Exercise in Good Government", pp. 7-8

⁹ Nitaya Onozawa, "Immigration from Japan to the USA, Historical Trends and Background" in *Tōkyō kaseigakuin tsukuba joshi daigaku kiyō*, Vol. 7 (2003), pp. 115-117.

Christianity were asphyxiating and many of them decided to leave Japan. Some of them also desired to avoid the mandatory after 1873 military service at home.

The 20th century imperialists traced the root of Japan's "overseas development" to labour migrations in Hawaii and Guam in 1868.¹⁰ Even earlier, in the 1880s their predecessors closely associated emigration with colonialism, viewing the mobilization of the ordinary people that emigrated abroad as the realization of the empire building process. In other words, the settlement of Japanese masses in far or more adjacent territories such as Korea¹¹ or China were intertwined with the formal colonial ventures of the state. Naturally it was preferable to channel immigrants to backward countries with weak governments; Japanese settlers could easily dominate the locals and assert Japan's influence less problematically there than in the US. Surplus population and social Darwinism theories, alongside with the ascent of nationalism and the imitation of western practices supplemented perfectly the "expansive nation" idea, the notion that the Japanese nation was predestined to expand. After 1868 for the more radicals, Japan, whose self-imposed seclusion suppressed its natural colonizing tendency, was ready to dedicate its energy and talents in conquest by leading the East, the "Asian race" against the rival "Aryan" one.¹² The Seikyōsha (Society for Political Education) founded in 1888, popularized the "preservation of the national essence", emigration-colonization scheme and the rejection of Western culture. Deriving originally from the Seikyōsha, the Tōhō kyōkai (East Asian society) was founded by Miyake Setsurei (1860-1945) and Fukumoto Nichinan or Makoto (1857-1921) in 1891 as a pressure group that encouraged Japanese commercial and political penetration to Manchuria, the South Seas and Korea. Similar organizations that raised funds and aroused public support for the Japanese settlements overseas were the Tōkyō keizaigaku kyōkai (Tōkyō Economic Society) founded in 1887 and the Kaigai ijū dōshikai (Friends of Overseas Emigration) formed in 1892.¹³ In the Western hemisphere where Tōkyō's military and economic means were less effective, Japanese imperialists promoted the idea of

¹⁰ On 29 April 1868 42 Japanese emigrants moved to Guam under three year contracts. Unpaid and mistreated they were brought home by the Japanese government in 1871. It was the first Japanese overseas immigration but resulted in failure. See O, *Cultural analysis*, p. 83.

¹¹ In 1904 during a parliamentary session a Deputy referred to the installation of 5 million Japanese in Korea as a solution to the overpopulation problem, a view shared by the law professor, Katō Masao. See Thomas F. Millard, "Japanese Immigration into Korea" in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 34, No. 2, Chinese and Japanese in America (Sep., 1909), p. 185, pp. 183-189. In 1880 835 Japanese residents were recorded in Korea and 166 in Manchuria. A decade later they numbered 7,245 and 864 respectively. In 1900 these numbers rose to 15,829 and 3,243. See Peter Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895-1910*, (London-Berkeley, 1995), p. 290.

¹² Eiichiro Azuma, "Pioneers of Overseas Japanese Development": Japanese American History and the Making of Expansionist Orthodoxy in Imperial Japan" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 67, No. 4 (Nov., 2008), pp. 1192.

¹³ Mihalopoulos, "An Exercise in Good Government", pp. 14-15.

“peaceful expansionism”¹⁴ as the historian Akira Iriye put it. Japanese immigrants in North and South America and Hawaii were urged to act as colonial settlers and to “create centers of economic and social activities closely linked with the mother country”. The superior qualities and industriousness of these patriotic pioneers of Japanese expansion ensured the feasibility of the plan against all odds: white oppression, racism and the occasional lack of governmental support.¹⁵

On 5 August 1891 Enomoto Takeaki in his capacity as Foreign Minister established the Emigration Department as a subdivision of his Ministry. The goal was to promote long-term Japanese agricultural settlements as a solution to the socio-economic problems at home and as a measure to improve the life and working conditions of the immigrants abroad. A more efficient state control over the migrant labour contracts was high in Enomoto’s agenda.¹⁶ The misconduct of Japanese immigrants amidst the unequal treaties revision strife was injuring the nation’s prestige. It also entailed the political danger of associating Japanese nationals with Chinese degeneration in western eyes.¹⁷ In addition the government was preoccupied about its obvious inability to protect its overseas citizens in case of need. Settler emigration for the Minister meant acquisition of territories overseas in “underdeveloped regions with the objective of opening up the land and increasing its productivity” by employing “Japanese capital and labor”. However, the Emigration Department failed to attract popular support besides Fukuzawa’s newspaper *Jiji Shimpō* that shared Enomoto’s conviction for the moral and economic benefits of the Japanese settlements overseas.¹⁸

The first Japanese political refugees came to America in the spring of 1869 from the victimized Aizu region. It was the first organized mass immigration to the US.¹⁹ Financially aided by the Aizu daimyo, a group of 40 ex-samurai was able to buy

¹⁴ Iriye explains his concept: “The line between emigration and colonization was rather tenuous. Most authors, advocating massive overseas emigration, were visualizing the creation of Japanese communities overseas as centers of economic and social activities closely linked to the mother country....Though the outright use of force was not envisaged, such a situation would be much closer to colonization than to mere emigration - like the massive English colonization of the North American continent. Thus, “peaceful expansionism” did not simply mean the passive emigration of individual Japanese, but could imply a government-sponsored, active programme of overseas settlement and positive activities to tie distant lands closer to Japan”, see Azuma, *Between Two Empires*, p. 22.

¹⁵ Azuma, “Pioneers of Overseas Japanese Development”, pp. 1193-1194.

¹⁶ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs proposed the “Law for the Protection of Japanese Women in Foreign Countries” to avert Japanese women from “conducting themselves shamelessly abroad” in March 1891. See Mihalopoulos, “An Exercise in Good Government”, p. 19.

¹⁷ Prominent members of the Japanese community in San Francisco such as Ōsawa Eizo in 1899 and Akamine Seiichiro in 1886, pointed out to their state’s consular authorities the risk of the scorned Chinese being associated with Japanese nationals. See Ryo Yoshida, “Japanese Immigrants and Their Christian Communities in North America: A Case Study of the Fukuinkai, 1877-1896” in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 1, Christians in Japan (2007), pp. 237-239.

¹⁸ Mihalopoulos, “An Exercise in Good Government”, pp. 15-18.

¹⁹ Hirohisa Kawaguchi, “Henry Schnell and Japanese Immigration to the United States” in *Journal of International Relations, Asia University*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1991), pp. 344-345.

600 acres of land at Gold Hill in Coloma, El Dorado County, California in June 1869. This is how the first Japanese settlement in America came into being under the title Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony. A few years later the endeavour failed; the settlers, without protection or assistance from Tōkyō, struggled for 8 more years until 1879. After the colony's liquidation, the rest of them dispersed and very little is known about their fate.²⁰ The first attempt to establish a new Japan failed but the endeavour paved the way for other Japanese agricultural colonies in the American West coast. The following years in other North American territories similar enterprises sprung out by men with little agricultural experience.²¹ They were liberals, many of them newly converted to Christianity and in search of a utopian society free of the conservatism and severity of the highly stratified Japanese society.²² The unexpected hardships and the discrimination policies they faced in the United States compelled them to relinquish these “Yamato”²³ colonies and return home. Still the Wakamatsu colony and in particular one of its members, a 17-year-old girl presumably called Okei were glorified by the expansionists as precursors of the Japanese colonial enterprise in Asia. Okei, depicted as the forerunner of the Japanese growth overseas epitomized colonization in popular culture, which through novels and films, presented the Japanese immigrants to Manchuria as Okei’s worthy disciples. In the face of a brave,

²⁰ O, *Cultural analysis*, pp. 69-71.

²¹ In 1887 Inoue Kakugorō led a party of 30 Japanese settlers in California with the purpose of establishing an agricultural colony in Valley Springs, Calaveras County. There he acquired 20 acres of land under the auspices and financial support of Fukuzawa. Inoue had fully adopted his benefactor’s line of thought: “...no reason exists for Japan to remain a small, isolated island in the Orient. Japanese should go to foreign lands without hesitation and select suitable places to live. They must not forget Japan, however, in normal or other times. They should consume Japanese products for daily necessities and they should start businesses which will benefit the homeland. The more emigration flourishes, the further our national power expand...”. Shūyū Sanjin, editor of a guide for prospective Japanese immigrants in America, one of the many circulating in 1880s Japan, exclaimed even more enthusiastically in 1887: “Come merchants! America is a veritable human paradise, the number one mine in the world. Gold, silver, and gems are scattered on her streets. If you can figure out a way of picking them up, you’ll become rich instantly to the tune of ten million and be able to enjoy ultimate human pleasures. Come artisans! Sculptors, lacquerers, carpenters, painters-anyone skilled in the least in the Japanese arts-can earn a lot of money by making fans, ceramics and lacquerware. Come students...”. See Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei. The world of the first generation Japanese Immigrants 1885-1924*, (London-New York, 1988), pp. 10-11.

²² An example of such a society was the Brotherhood of the New Life created by Thomas Lake Harris (1823-1906). Harris accompanied by some Satsuma men travelled first to Wassaic, next to Amenias New York and finally at Brocton where the New Life colony was established in August 1867. More Japanese joined the Brotherhood in the following months. Ultimately Kanaye Nagasawa (1852-1934) inherited the colony which under his leadership became more agricultural-commercial than “utopian”. Despite the mass departure of his compatriots Nagasawa and Harris planned to create a huge agrarian colony of Japanese immigrants on the west coast of Mexico in the late 1890s. The project did not materialize due to their failure to attract funding. See John E Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers, Japanese Journeys to America and Hawaii 1850-80*, (Chicago, 2000), pp. 82-91. For more on Harris’ colony, see William S. Bailey, “The Harris Community: Brotherhood of The New Life” in *New York History*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (July 1935), pp. 278-285.

²³ The Yamato term differentiates the mainland Japanese from the other ethnic groups residing in the islands. It derives from the Yamato province where in the 4th century the imperial court was initially seated.

pure (purportedly died a virgin) young girl that was the first recorded Japanese woman to die and be buried in the United States, the colonialists in Tōkyō constructed a romantic legend that exalted Japanese agrarianism, morality, tenacity and expansion.²⁴

After the 1892 American ban on Chinese immigration the number of the Japanese seeking employment and a better life in West America was in the rise. Mexicans, Southern Asians, Filipinos and Japanese were fervently sought to perform the most physically arduous tasks.²⁵ Consequently the numbers of Japanese immigrants exploded in a similar fashion. The US census of 1880 recorded approximately 150 Japanese in the mainland while the 1890 census recorded 2,292. In 1900 this number reached 24,000.²⁶ However by 1891, based on congressional legislation, officers of the American Treasury Department commenced patrols for what the press was calling the "Dirty Japanese". Between 1891 and 1909 Tōkyō sought to promote the immigration only of those worthy to represent the nation abroad.²⁷ On 4 May 1892 the newspaper *Morning Call* declared: "Japanese Pouring In: 'Put up the Bars,' Say Our Working People; Immigration on the Increase; What Collector Phelps Says of the Outlook; Bad for Our Boys and Girls; Street Filled with Japanese Sirens, Anarchists from the Mikado's Realm".²⁸ This discrimination and prejudicial treatment could only injure the pride of a nation that since 1868 had done literally everything to be treated as equal. These restrictions resulted in illegal practices by private immigration companies; after 1894 Tōkyō delegated the immigration enterprise to private firms (Meiji Emigration Company, Yokohama Emigration Company, Nihon Yoshisa Emigration Company and others). The Japanese in the US were mostly absorbed in agricultural, railroad, fishery, mills and smelters' enterprises, earning less than the Italians, Greeks and East European immigrants but more than the Mexicans and the Chinese.²⁹ Tōkyō, preoccupied that the wrong kind of people were going to the US, temporarily prohibited travel to North America on 2 August 1900.³⁰

The most popular destination for the Japanese immigration flow however, was undoubtedly Hawaii. The Hawaiian government was in urgent need for foreign working hands for its sugar plantations. The first mass Japanese emigration to Hawaii was initiated in 1868. Extreme poverty pushed many Japanese to immigrate to Hawaii. Working literally as slaves many died due to exhaustion and lack of medical

²⁴ Azuma, "Pioneers of Overseas Japanese Development", pp. 1200-1205.

²⁵ Raymond Leslie Buell, "The Development of the Anti-Japanese Agitation in the United States" in *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Dec., 1922), p. 606.

²⁶ Yamato Ichihashi, *Japanese Immigration, its status in California*, (San Francisco, 1915), pp. 3-5.

²⁷ Mitziko Sawada, "Culprits and Gentlemen: Meiji Japan's Restrictions of Emigrants to the United States, 1891- 1909" in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (Aug., 1991), pp. 341-342.

²⁸ O, *Cultural analysis*, pp. 306, 375.

²⁹ H. A. Millis, "Some of the Economic Aspects of Japanese Immigration" in *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Dec., 1915), pp. 791-792.

³⁰ Sawada, "Culprits and Gentlemen", p. 348.

care. After the end of the civil war the government took prompt measures. In September 1869, it sent Ueno Kagenori (1845–1888), as special envoy to negotiate with Hawaiian authorities the matter of the inhumane treatment. The pressure exerted by Ueno resulted to improved wages and living conditions for the Japanese labourers. On 19 August 1871 Japan and Hawaii signed the Treaty of Amity which allowed Japanese labour immigration to Hawaii.³¹

On 4 March 1881, the Hawaiian ruler, King David Kalakaua (1838–1891) arrived at Tōkyō as part of an international diplomatic tour and asked Emperor Meiji to send immigrants to Hawaii as a means of resolving the shortage of labourers on the sugar plantations. King Kalakaua offered his niece's hand to Prince Higashifushimi Yoshihito (1867–1922) for the formation of a royal alliance between the Hawaiian Kingdom and Japan.³² Foreign Minister Inoue Kaoru believed that immigration to Hawaii would stimulate commercial activity, banking, shipbuilding and the influx of foreign currency so vital for the state's modernization efforts.³³ The politician Ōishi Masami (1855–1935) analysed the "relation between shipping, emigration, and the expansion of Japanese trade" and gave his consent for the "peaceful emigration of Japanese overseas". Thus, expansion (a commercial and not a territorial one) was to be achieved by gaining trading footholds in foreign lands which Japan could utilize as market for its exports and upon which it would exert economic dominance. The professor of Japanese history, Kobayashi Masaaki regarded shipping lines and in particular Mitsubishi as "the large private enterprise in Japan which adroitly utilized the 'nationalism of the government'". The governments of Japan and Hawaii finally reached an agreement on 30 June 1884. No restrictions would be imposed as long as the rights and safety of Japanese labourers were guaranteed.³⁴

³¹ Ibid., pp. 86-90.

³² According to the US State Department, from 1785 to 1895 there were 103 American interventions in the affairs of foreign nations such as Hawaii and the Caribbean and South American states. The king of Hawaii proposed to Emperor Meiji a "Union and Federation of Asiatic Nations and Sovereigns" as means of evading the US grip and preserving his state's contested independence. Kalakaua was even disposed to offer Hawaiian territory to lure Tokyo into an alliance. Kalakaua was prepared to go further than that. He approached London asking modern firearms and formal protection against external (US) intervention. He sought to consolidate his state's integrity by expanding its territory. In 1883 he dispatched missions to the New Hebrides and Gilbert Islands and devised plans to annex Samoa and the Tonga Islands. As anticipated, the leading powers interested in the region namely the US and Germany did not allow a new player to interfere with their imperialistic plans in the Pacific. See Gerald Horne, *The White Pacific: US Imperialism and Black Slavery in the South Seas after the Civil War*, (Honolulu, 2007), pp. 103-115.

³³ Inoue hailed from Yamaguchi and was aware of the serious socioeconomic problems his hometown, Fukuoka, Kumamoto, Hiroshima and the southern regions in general faced; he suggested these prefectures, due to their agricultural tradition, as the main areas for recruiting labourers for Hawaii. 96% of all Japanese immigrants during the period 1885-1895 period originated from these four prefectures. See Alan Takeo Moriyama, *Imingaisha: Japanese Emigration Companies and Hawaii, 1894-1908*, (Honolulu, 1985), p. 13.

³⁴ The grim economic situation and oppressive policies gave rise to the liberal "Freedom and People's Rights Movement" in the 1880s. Apprehensive of this threat to the authority of central government, the

However, due to the June 1887 coup d'etat in Honolulu, when the white oligarchs forced the king to grant them a favourable constitution, the rights of suffrage and naturalization were rescinded; suffrage was granted only to Caucasian men of twenty years or over who were able to read and write Hawaiian, English, or other European languages. Whereas it was obvious that the provisional government was uneasy about the massive Japanese presence on the islands, Inoue was elaborating the eventuality of bringing Hawaii under Japanese influence. The next Foreign Minister and simultaneously Prime Minister Itō entered into discussions with Honolulu in order to obtain voting rights for the Japanese labourers in Hawaii. These efforts did not come to fruition. As a result of the establishment of the pro-American Republic of Hawaii on 4 July 1894, the 29,069 Japanese citizens that had immigrated to Hawaii between 1885 and 1894 were left unprotected, without legal rights and mistreated in a country preparing for its annexation by the United States. In the 1890s American expansionists viewed Hawaii as a naval base to defend the West Coast and as a commercial centre on the way to the Asian markets.³⁵

The white sugar plant owners overthrew the monarchy and on the 1st of February 1893 proclaimed Hawaii a US protectorate and dispatched envoys to Washington for the coveted annexation. The US government had been already leasing Pearl Harbor as a naval base since 1866. However, the new President Stephen Grover Cleveland (1837-1908) did not proceed to an outright annexation probably because his party, the Democrats, desired an Americanized Hawaii and were opposing the incorporation of numerous Chinese and Japanese inhabitants to the United States. Racism seemed to halt the annexation process that had been envisioned by American politicians since the 1850s. The American Minister in the islands John Leavitt Stevens (1820-1895) claimed in 1894 that if "the present state of things is allowed to go on... the Asiatics will soon be largely preponderate".³⁶ On 9 February 1893 the American newspaper *The Nation* wrote disapprovingly about the eventuality of awarding US citizenship to a population of "natives recently emerged from slavery" and *The Chicago Herald* claimed Hawaii would be "a pigmy State of the Union". In February 1893, the *New York Herald* asserted: "It would be a curious thing indeed to someday have a close election for President of the United States settled by the votes of semi-barbaric Sandwich Islanders, whose grandfathers were cannibals, aided by Chinese and Japanese and Papuan laborers".³⁷

Meiji leaders seriously began considering overseas emigration as an alternative option to suppress the movement. During the Matsukata deflation policy (1881-1885) there were over 28,000 applications for immigration labour, a number that highlighted the terrible domestic situation. See O, *Cultural analysis*, pp. 111, 134-135.

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 136-155.

³⁶ Eric T. L. Love, *Race over Empire, Racism and US Imperialism 1865-1900*, (Chapper Hill, London, 2004), pp. 73-79.

³⁷ In January 1893 even the geostrategist Alfred Thayer Mahan urged his government to act before any other power in order for Hawaii to "be an outpost of European civilization" and not "of the comparative barbarism of China". He asked for the expansion of the American naval armaments programme and a robust policy against Tōkyō. See Love, *Race over Empire*, pp. 102-108.

While President Cleveland seemed sceptical about the islands' future the white oligarchs proclaimed the Republic of Hawaii on 4 July 1894. In March the new establishment assembly for the drafting of a constitution, did not include any Asian representative even though according to the Hawaiian census of 1895, native Hawaiians numbered 31,000, the Japanese 24,400, the Chinese 21,600, the Portuguese 15,100, the Americans 3,000, the British 2,200, the Germans 1,400 and 8,400 were of mixed race. Despite the abuse and the hardships another 40,000 Japanese made the journey and settled in Hawaii during the 1894-1900 period.³⁸ Tōkyō witnessing the upheaval and the danger for its citizens sent the battleship *Naniwa* to Hawaii. Arriving on 23 February 1893, captain Togo Heihachiro (1848-1934) the future Russo-Japanese war hero, in command of the *Naniwa* declared: "Now that we have laid anchor in Honolulu, you will have to consider this ship an extension of our country. Be careful in your actions as your every move will reflect on the honor of our nation. Should occasion arise, we must be prepared to act decisively and with courage as befitting our nation's warriors". The reason behind Togo's actions was the Republic of Hawaii's refusal of entry to 713 out of 902 immigrants on 27 February and 20 March since they did not possess the required by the 1894 Act 50-dollar guarantee fee.³⁹ In Japan outraged citizens protested about the maltreatment of their countrymen. In late 1896, 42 immigrants were forced to return to Japan. The frequency of these episodes and the denial of suffrage for the Japanese immigrants damaged bilateral relations and immigration to Hawaii was suspended.⁴⁰

The Japanese consul at Honolulu Shimamura Hisashi announced after the 1896 episode that an imperial warship would arrive and anchor at the capital's port permanently. He justified this action by asserting that in Hawaii there was the largest concentration of Japanese outside the home country. On 18 March 1897, he requested the arrival of a warship: "to exhibit our power and protect 26,000 Japanese almost one-fourth of the total population of Hawaii". Once again under Togo, *Naniwa* left Yokohama for Hawaii in May 1897. This fact relieved the Japanese immigrants but alarmed the white Hawaiians.⁴¹ The American Secretary of the Navy, John Davis Long (1838-1915) ordered its staff to revise the current naval war plan and account for the possibility of a Japanese-American war. Within three months Rear Admiral Montgomery Sicard (1836-1900) devised the first American war plan against Japan. The fear of a massive Japanese riot against the pro-American Hawaiian regime intensified Washington's naval presence in those waters: four warships would guard Honolulu and patrol the surrounding area in search of Japanese activity. During the same time 50,000 dollars were earmarked for investment to Pearl Harbor's naval base.⁴²

³⁸ Ibid., p. 116.

³⁹ O, *Cultural analysis*, pp. 110-112.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 106-112.

⁴¹ William Michael Morgan, "The Anti-Japanese Origins of the Hawaiian Annexation Treaty of 1897" in *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 6, No. 4, (Sept. 1982), pp. 27-28.

⁴² Ibid., pp. 28-29.

President William McKinley (1843-1901) succeeded Cleveland on 4 March 1897 and as early as June took measures for the long-awaited annexation. The white dominant class calculating the rate of Japanese workers pouring into Hawaii to a thousand per month urged Washington to act swiftly. They suggested the annulment of the contract labour system as a means of securing Christianity's and American civilization's victory over the "Asian hordes" and the "Mongolian supremacy". On 16 March 1898 during the annexation talks the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, apparently referring to the Asian menace known as yellow peril, proposed swift action "to prevent the establishment of an alien and possibly hostile stronghold in a position commanding the Pacific coast and the commerce of the North Pacific". On 19 April 1897 Theodore Roosevelt Jr. (1858-1919) was appointed Assistant Secretary of the Navy. Being an ardent expansionist himself, he added his voice to those advocating the swift annexation of the islands. The 9 April 1897 *Chicago Tribune* read: "the invasion of the Asiatics can be stopped only by immediate annexation".

The politician Hoshi Tōru (1850-1901) in his effort to stall the annexation informed the Secretary of State, John Sherman (1823-1900) that Tōkyō was against this eventuality because of the possible infringement of the Japanese interests guaranteed by the previous agreements with Hawaii. Sherman replied in April 1897 that legitimate Japanese rights would be respected. On 12 April, the Hawaiian consul in Yokohama reported that the Japanese masses were "most belligerent". On the same day, the American Minister in Tōkyō warned that the denial of entry to the immigrants spurred warlike feelings in the Japanese press. He concluded that Tōkyō had to dispatch imperial warships in order to satiate the people's thirst for retaliation. Sherman knew that even a single battleship could bring a state like Hawaii without navy or army to its knees. For this reason, he dispatched a flotilla of the Navy Department to Honolulu. On May 18 the special emissary Akiyama Masanosuke (1866-1937) was dispatched to investigate the entry denials. A potential Japanese demand for compensation concealed a greater danger for Washington: if Hawaii denied to pay, Japan could, potentially, resort to force. If Honolulu were to concede voting rights as a result of Tōkyō's pressures the dominant pro-annexationist clique would be marginalized by the numerically preponderant Japanese community.⁴³ Akiyama did demand an indemnity; after 14 months of negotiations he obtained \$75,000 as compensation. Furthermore, he pressed for the right to reside, travel and trade, legal protection, suffrage rights and a formal assurance that Japanese immigrants would never again be subjected to arbitrary treatment. Despite the legitimacy of these demands, Roosevelt in June 1897 was pressing for war in order to impede Japan from utilizing the immigration dispute as a pretext for occupying the

⁴³ Morgan, "The Anti-Japanese Origins", pp. 35-37. Japan's firm attitude against a Great Power would have been unthinkable 10 years before. In 1897 though Tōkyō was revitalized by the splendid victory over China in 1894-1895 and the partial annulment of the unequal treaties. Thus, it enjoyed a position of a greater respect and equality internationally. This fact surely made its politicians, diplomats and common people more optimistic, robust and far less submissive in their dealings with Western or Asian representatives.

islands. On May 22 Shimamura now as Minister in Honolulu visited the Foreign Ministry to receive the Hawaiian government's final answer. When it was conveyed to him that an official response was still underway Shimamura replied that no more time would be granted. As a result the Japanese Minister in Hawaii informed the local press that "Japan wants nothing unreasonable; she wants fairness and justice in the matter-nothing else. If she cannot get it-well, I do not know what will follow... the honor of Japan is at stake... If I cannot get a reasonable answer to my request I may go home, and perhaps someone else will have better success. If I withdraw, you know what follows. I hope it will not reach that point". Shimamura's firm stance was interpreted as a Japanese formal ultimatum by Washington.⁴⁴

Roosevelt advised McKinley that an annexation treaty would discourage Tōkyō and would prove how strongly Washington felt about the matter. According to Senator Georg Frisbie Hoar (1826-1904), McKinley confessed while talking about the islands: "Japan has her eye on them. Her people are crowding in there. I am satisfied that they do not go there voluntarily, as ordinary immigrants, but that Japan is pressing them in there in order to get possession before anybody can interfere. If something is not done, there will be before long another revolution and Japan will get control. That rival and predatory nation, is doubtless waiting her opportunity." Geared up by such theories and notions of Anglo-Saxonism as opposed to Pan-Asianism or Pan-Slavism, the House of Representatives passed the annexation act (209 to 91) on 15 June 1898. The American Senate did likewise on 6 July (42 to 21).⁴⁵ The State Department informed Hoshi on 16 June that the Japanese-Hawaiian treaties were annulled and superseded on the basis of the previous Japanese-American treaties. Due to the subsequent Japanese protests the US maintained armed forces in Hawaii. McKinley's administration ignored the Japanese demands and Tōkyō gradually withdrew them.⁴⁶ In the meantime, many Japanese had left the islands to settle in the continental US, where wages were higher.⁴⁷ The Americans decided to absorb the island kingdom for reasons of strategic security. Japan on the other hand tried not to annex Hawaii but to exert some influence in order to defend the interests of its nationals there but without success. Occupying a territory so far away from home was not a feasible option for Tōkyō at the moment. The fact that it found the courage to clash with a Great Power over the protection of its immigrants is explained by Japan's resolution to be respected and recognized as a first class state abroad.

Besides the overpopulation problem and the need to protect the immigrant nuclei Japanese colonialists draw their inspiration from the nation's long historical tradition. For this reason, we must take several steps back in history to explore the very origins of Japan's modern drive for colonies. Naturally enough the first colonial

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 39-40.

⁴⁵ Love, *Race over Empire*, pp. 145-156.

⁴⁶ Morgan, "The Anti-Japanese Origins", pp. 42-44.

⁴⁷ Yuzo Murayama, "Information and Emigrants: Interprefectural Differences of Japanese Emigration to the Pacific Northwest, 1880-1915", in *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Mar., 1991), pp. 125-129.

pretensions were aimed and directed beyond the familiar Tsushima strait, towards ancient Korea. The *Nihon Shoki* or *Nihongi*, known as the *Chronicles of Japan* was completed in 720 AD and is Japan's oldest historical record along with the *Kojiki* (712 AD). Both literary works cannot be considered accurate historical sources. In regard to Korea, the *Nihongi* asserts that in 29 BC the kingdom of Minama was founded. Many Japanese considered Minama to be an ancient outpost of Japanese influence in the peninsula.⁴⁸ Apart from geostrategic considerations, traditional folkloric elements blended with debatable historical facts were employed to legitimize Japanese claims over their ill-fated neighbour in the 16th and in the 19th centuries.⁴⁹ Such is the case of the legendary empress Jingū Kōgō, considered and revered as the conqueror of Korea, who, according to the *Kojiki* and *Nihongi* chronicles, reigned from 201 AD to 269 AD. Her role and very existence is controversial. Since at the time we cannot speak about "Japan" and "Korea" as state entities the tradition of war and conquest is more probable a later manufactured narrative. For a few modern-day scholars there is a core of historical facts behind the legend.⁵⁰ Scientifically unproven the "first invasion of Korea" holds little relative value. However, Jingū Kōgō's depictions inscribed on the Ema, the wooden wishing plaques offered at Shintō Shrines, suggests the impact and legend's attraction to the lower masses' psyche in the 19th century. Especially in Southern Japan, home of the most conservative and militant societies in the archipelago and closer geographically to Korea the popularity of the supposed conquest cannot be seen as merely a popular folklore story. The shrines where the Ema were dedicated were meeting and discussion points for the local community. Many distressed by the foreign danger identified the annexation of Korea as a viable solution to the nation's problems. A most likely fictitious figure provided inspiration for an actual compelling issue such as the relations of the state with its neighbours. This is how susceptible to mystical and allegorical imageries Japanese temperament was in the 19th century.⁵¹

⁴⁸ The fact that the Japanese never forgot their overseas legacy is confirmed by two testimonies. The politician Hirano Kuniomi (1828-64) asserted in the early 1860s that Japan "must reconquer Korea and restore the prefecture of Minama" as a step towards global hegemony. Much later in the 1910 issue of the *History and Geography* journal, the editor celebrating the annexation of Korea to the Japanese empire that year commented on the glorious event by mentioning that the Japanese in 663 AD had lost their influence in Korea but the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars finally "completed" the work that had started in the ancient times. See Yoshi S. Kuno, *Japanese Expansion on the Asiatic Continent. A Study in the History of Japan with Special Reference to Her International Relations with China, Korea, and Russia*, Vol. 1, (Berkeley, 1937), pp. 194-195, 241-242

⁴⁹ Richard W. Anderson, "Jingū Kōgō "Ema" in Southwestern Japan: Reflections and Anticipations of the "Seikanron" Debate in the Late Tokugawa and Early Meiji Period" in *Asian Folklore Studies*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (2002), p. 253.

⁵⁰ According to *Kojiki*, Jingū Kōgō, in charge of her army and guided by the gods, ultimately subjugated Korea. In the same records the story of Sun Goddess Amataresu's brother Susanoo-no-Mikoto (mythical), god of sea and storms is found. According to some (Japanese) interpretations Susanoo settled in Korea and was the ancestor of the first legendary king of Korea Dangun Wanggeom. See Okakura, Kakuzō, *The awakening of Japan*, (London, 1905), pp. 203-204.

⁵¹ Anderson, "Jingū Kōgō", pp. 257-264.

The annihilation of the Mongolian armies during the invasions of 1274 and 1281 convinced some Japanese that they were invincible and under divine protection. China's eventual defeat in the hands of barbarian hordes contrasted with Japanese martial supremacy and dispersed the traditional feeling of respect and fear towards the great continental empire in later centuries.⁵² China came to be seen as vulnerable, feeble, savage and was scorned by many Japanese. In the 14th century some of them turned to piracy; they ravaged not only ships but also villages and cities, killing, plundering and taking prisoners along the Korean and Chinese coasts. They were called Wakō, "dwarf pirates", a term deriving from the Chinese that used this insult to mock the Japanese.⁵³ The first large scale wave of violence struck Korea in the 1220s but it was between 1376 and 1385 that 174 pirate raids (228 or even 346 according to other scholars) took place.⁵⁴ From 1440 to 1550 Chinese records mention only 25 Wakō raids but in the decade between 1551 to 1560 no less than 467 are documented. Japanese scholars to this day minimize the participation of their countrymen in these onslaughts shifting the blame to the Chinese. They stress that the few Japanese that ventured in the continent were misunderstood, in search of mutually beneficial commerce and carried weapons merely for self-defence. Other Asian historians seem less sceptical about their role.⁵⁵

For the Koreans, the biggest Wakō raid was the Japanese invasion of 1592. Toyotomi Hideyoshi the warlord that brought an end to the warring states period (Sengoku Jidai 1467-1603), a time of constant conflict and utter disorder, envisioned a great condimental empire under his reign. For the samurai and even the monks that shared his vision, the primordial conquest of Korea by Empress Jingū justified the venture.⁵⁶ The great unifier in 1591 set the date of his continental invasion. The historian Tanaka Yoshinari wrote in 1905 that the invasion was the realization of the Japanese manifested destiny.⁵⁷ Korea was entirely overrun despite China's intervention.⁵⁸ The other Asian countries would soon follow according to Hideyoshi's world domination plan. However, despite the overwhelming victories against the

⁵² In a 1118 communication, the Chinese Emperor addressed the Japanese Emperor as the "Chief of the tribe of Eastern Barbarians" and demanded tributary offerings. See Kuno, *Japanese Expansion*, Vol. 1, p. 68.

⁵³ For more information on the Wakō activity, see M.S. Seoh, "A Brief Documentary Survey of Japanese Pirate Activities in Korea in the 13th-15th Centuries" in *Journal of Korean Studies* (1969-1971), Vol. 1, No. 1 (July-December 1969), pp. 23-39 and Peter D. Shapinsky, "Predators, Protectors, and Purveyors: Pirates and Commerce in Late Medieval Japan" in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (Autumn, 2009), pp. 273-313.

⁵⁴ Diachronic acts of Japanese aggression are well remembered and documented in Korean ancient historical records. In short, between 14 BC and 493 AD more than 20 invasions, sieges and acts of looting are diligently recorded. Ibid., pp. 214-217.

⁵⁵ Jurgis Elisonas, "The Inseparable Trinity: Japan's Relations with China and Korea", in *The Cambridge History of Japan, volume 4, Early Modern Japan*, ed. J. W. Hall, M. B. Jansen, (New York, Cambridge, 1991, pp. 249-253.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 265.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 269-270.

⁵⁸ Kuno, *Japanese Expansion*, Vol. 1, pp. 151-152.

Chinese-Korean forces the Japanese evacuated Korea without any gains after Hideyoshi's death on 18 August 1598. For Koreans the seven-year war evokes enmity and deep rancour against the Japanese to this day. Literature works and monuments were built to remind to the upcoming generations the devastation, cruelty and atrocities of the first Japanese occupation.⁵⁹ The Japanese were the only ones to emerge from the conflict with some profit, albeit cultural. No territorial gains were gained much less an Asiatic empire. Around 50,000 Koreans were sent forcibly to Japan and they brought with them books, Buddhist scriptures, Confucianism and superior techniques in printing, weaving and porcelain ware manufacture. More importantly the war provided inspiration to the 19th Japanese and convinced them that fighting the feeble mainlanders, meant certain victory.⁶⁰

Japanese imperial ambitions were not confined just in the mainland though. During the campaign and ecstatic by the first brilliant victories Hideyoshi planned to annex Formosa (Taiwan), Borneo, Philippines, Burma, India and Persia. He sent a series of letters demanding subordination to his divine rule to the king of Korea, the Portuguese viceroy of Goa in India and the Spanish governor of the Philippines among others.⁶¹ In November 1593 he composed a letter to the ruler of Formosa demanding his submission by dispatching a tribute bearing emissary as a sign of subordination: "The Philippines and Liu Chiu (Ryūkyū) have sent tributary-bearing envoys to our country, thus showing due reverence. [...] Your country, however, has not yet sent any envoy to our military headquarters. This lack of loyalty will certainly bring the curse of Heaven upon you[...] if you should fail to pay due reverence, we shall immediately instruct our military leaders to invade your country and to inflict severe punishment". The Japanese messenger unable to locate any form of central authority in Taiwan returned home bringing the letter with him".⁶²

Hideyoshi's successor was the last of the three unifiers. Tokugawa Ieyasu was the founder of the Tokugawa shogunate that was to last from 1603 to 1867. Unlike his predecessor, he was not obsessed with overseas territorial expansion. Instead he strived to make Japan Asia's most important economic and commercial power. In 1609 peace with Korea was restored and a trade treaty went into effect. In the spring

⁵⁹ In February 1593, the Japanese forces in Seoul destroyed the city "killing to a man all the Chinamen (Tōjin) that there were in the capital and burning all the houses outside the [Japanese] fortifications". Many Koreans were put to death or mutilated indiscriminately during the occupation. Collecting noses and ears was a token of martial valour for the invaders. They preserved them in salt, dispatched them to the Inspectors General in barrels and shipped them to Japan. Between September and October 1597 just one unit submitted 18,350 noses. Even today the "Mount of ears" can be seen in Kyōtō. See Ibid., pp. 280, 290-291.

⁶⁰ For some an unbroken hereditary link existed between the first invasion by Jingū Kōgō, Hideyoshi's expedition and the Sino-Japanese war (1894-1895). It was employed to reaffirm every time the Japanese claims in Korea. See Carlo Haushofer, *Il Giappone costruisce il suo Impero*, Trans. A. Pedineli, (Florence, 1942) p. 206.

⁶¹ Ubaldo Iaccorino, "Il Giappone e le Filippine Spagnole, (1592-1594): La Minaccia di Hideyoshi" in *Il Giappone*, Vol. 46 (2008), pp. 5-16.

⁶² Haushofer, *Il Giappone*, pp. 313-323.

of the same year Ieyasu instructed the lord of Satsuma to invade the Ryūkyū kingdom. Ryūkyū was a vassal state of the Ming empire, which by becoming also a Japanese dependency, could act as an intermediary between China and Japan and facilitate commercial relations. His trade policy failed in China but not in the rest of South East Asia; a revived ocean going commercial navy of 198 vessels established regular trade connection with the main commercial nodes between Japan and India: Malay, Siam,⁶³ Annam, Java, Formosa, Cambodia, Batavia, Borneo, Timor, Celebes and Macao⁶⁴ in which Japanese communities started taking shape.⁶⁵

In February 1609 Ieyasu claimed: “Siam, Cambodia, and many other far-off nations have rendered due reverence to us by sending their trade ships annually, but Formosa, which is situated so close to our country, has not established any relations with us. This is an international outrage which we cannot overlook. Therefore, you, Lord of Arima, are hereby instructed to send a military expedition to that island and take necessary steps”. Arima’s (Arima Harunobu 1567–1612) orders were to engage in hostilities in case the Formosans “stubbornly oppose” him, study the local products⁶⁶ and navigate the island’s coastline drawing a sketch map. Arima also had to arrange the terms of the Chinese-Japanese commercial dealings in Taiwan and bring back with him forcibly or not Taiwanese envoys. It was a scouting expedition to a potential trading post with the continent that was backed by considerable force. The Japanese clashed with the natives and captured some tribesmen that were presented to the Shogun upon their arrival. In 1616 a similar expedition was arranged. On 4 May 4,000 men (some historian doubt this estimate) on board 13 war vessels encountered a hurricane en route to Formosa. The disastrous result was that only one ship reached Taiwan, a meagre force to invade the unruly island. The Japanese failures of 1593, 1609 and 1616 can be attributed to the very nature of Taiwan. What frustrated the Japanese was the total lack of central authority, the absence of a general leader that would be forced or lured into tributary relations. In contrast the politically fragmented tribes were conquered rather easily by the Dutch, who employed the language of trade and gunpowder rather than the language of the tributary system. The Dutch bluntly took advantage of the vacuum of power in Taiwan under the nose of a relatively potent Asian state from a military point of view.⁶⁷

⁶³ Yoko Nagazumi, “Expansion and Diaspora: Ayutthaya and Japan: embassies and trade in the seventeenth century” in *The Pacific World, Lands, Peoples and History of the Pacific 1500-1900*, ed. M. Caprio, K. Matsuda, (Hampshire, 2007), p. 248.

⁶⁴ Ken'ichi Kuroda, *Nihon shokumin shisōshi* [History of Japanese colonial thought], (Tokyo, 1942), pp. 3-4.

⁶⁵ In 1639 108 Japanese were recorded in Batavia, modern day Jakarta. In Cambodia, their total number was around 1,500 in the 1620s. See Madalena Ribeiro, “The Japanese diaspora in the seventeenth century according to Jesuit sources” in *The Pacific World, Lands, Peoples and History of the Pacific 1500-1900*, ed. M Caprio, K. Matsuda, (Hampshire, 2007), pp. 277-284.

⁶⁶ Stephen Turnbull, “Onward, Christian Samurai! The Japanese Expeditions to Taiwan in 1609 and 1616” in *Japanese Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1, p. 4.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18. The Japanese resented and opposed the Dutch colonial rule in Taiwan that lasted from 1624 until 1662. The traders residing there refused to pay taxes and created complications to the

Besides immigration and the warlike legacy, other secondary features shaped the direction of Japan's expansionism. The Tokugawa period's isolation, highly hierarchical society and autocratic rule were features that shaped Japan's later colonial policy. As we have seen, we can trace an extraordinary mixture of an overseas quasi-mythical legacy and a latent expansionistic tendency: a distinct national identity, a conviction in invincibility and divinity, a contempt for the "inferior" adjacent nations,⁶⁸ a profound military tradition, a precedent of an inspiring offensive, venerable territorial and commercial aspirations and a sense of mission to overthrow the humiliating Sinocentric tributary system.⁶⁹ Undoubtedly most of these traits were duly reshaped, exploited and diffused by 19th century Japan's pro-colonial elements. They were vividly resurrected as a result of the promising Meiji Restoration, another step towards the fulfilment of the nation's worldwide imperial destiny. Even before the direct involvement of the common people with politics through the suffrage in 1890, the Emperor promulgated the Charter Oath in April 1868. Among other provisions, it called the people to seek knowledge from throughout the world, and take an active role in participating in the state's goals.⁷⁰ Common people, taking advantage of the new freedoms, plunged in heated discussions on foreign policy and the revision of the unequal treaties nationwide. Among them were some who called for overseas expansion. As it has been already established however, in the 1870s-1880s the domestic and international condition of Japan did not permit the realization of their aspirations for the time being.

As we have already seen, a vulnerable and feeble Japan in the advent of European colonialism in the Far East and the Pacific was more in danger of becoming a colony rather than creating a vast empire itself.⁷¹ There were Western ambitions on

newly instated administration. The Dutch in order to cope with the troublesome Japanese merchants excluded them from their colony. One of them, Suetsugu Heizo Masanao (1546-1630), worried about the encroachment of Japanese trading rights by the Dutch East India Company escalated the conflict. In 1627 he recruited 16 aborigines and dispatched them to Edo as an allegedly Taiwanese delegation asking for Japanese protection against the oppressive Europeans. The fake ambassadors failed to attract the Tokugawa shogunate's intervention, already oriented towards the national seclusion policy. See Adam Clulow, "A Fake Embassy, the Lord of Taiwan and Tokugawa Japan" in *Japanese Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 35-38.

⁶⁸ 18th and 19th century Japanese adopted from the West the racist notions about savages and civilization mission and viewed with contempt the coloured people of Africa and the Pacific. See Richard Albert Bradshaw, *Japan and European colonialism in Africa, 1800-1937*, Doctoral Dissertation, Ohio University, 1992, pp. 102-103.

⁶⁹ The politician Tōgō Minoru (1881-1959) found undisputed proof on the nation's ancient skills to colonize overseas territories while examining the Japanese history. The 6 preconditions set up by the geographer Sir Charles Prestwood Lucas (1853-1931), for a successful colonial race were: entrepreneurial spirit, commercial insight, the ability to adapt to new environments, courage, administrative skill and the power of assimilation; according to Tōgō all were present in Japan's history. See Mark R. Peattie, "Japanese Attitudes Toward Colonialism, 1895-1945" in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*, ed. R. H. Myers, M. R. Peattie, (New Jersey, 1984), p. 87.

⁷⁰ Ryōsuke Ishii, *History of Political Institutions in Japan*, (Tokyo, 1980), p. 100.

⁷¹ Sven Saaler, *Pan-Asianism in Meiji and Taishō Japan – A Preliminary Framework*, (Tokyo, 2002), p. 13.

territories where Japan's sovereignty was unclear,⁷² such as Hokkaidō (Ezo) and the islands to its north, the humiliating unequal treaties were in effect and the Western Powers maintained troops in Japanese soil and arrogantly had the ability to attack or blockade port cities at will (like the Kagoshima Bombardment in August 1863). Temporary servility and mimetic modernization policies seemed to deflect the Western encroachment elsewhere. The Meiji leaders struggled to transform Japan from a weak agrarian second-rate state to a modern power able to resist foreign conquest. Projection of military might, colonial possessions⁷³ and modern economical and administration models were the high-status symbols in late 19th century. To the Japanese leadership at the time the world seemed to be divided into colonies and colonizers, oppressors and oppressed. In practice, the Japanese leadership had a rather straightforward dilemma: between the appealing model of the British Empire and the detrimental position of Egypt or China the choice was obvious. The constant threat of foreign intervention, Western arrogance, the Restoration process, the Boshin civil war and the renewed Shintō and Kokutai teachings galvanized the entire spectrum of Japanese society after centuries of restraint, isolation and socio-political fragmentation.⁷⁴ Moreover the samurai class and the fiefdoms may have been liquidated but the feudal, militaristic mentality could not be wiped out in a few short years of modern progressive legislation. As the former warriors were frequently employed in administrative positions and in the army their militaristic, belligerent influence never really waned.⁷⁵ After the Restoration, political, economic and military limitations, as we have seen, meant that Japan was not capable of asserting its interests to distant territories and had to endure its inferior diplomatic position until the time was right. The traumatic experience of Western contact came as a shock and convinced the Meiji leaders that patience at first and aggression, when appropriate, were the solutions amidst a hostile world. The answer to the western menace to national security was prestige, militarism⁷⁶ and the acquisition of territory at the

⁷² In this case, the unjustified anxiety of hostile intrusion functioned as a verified act of aggression.

⁷³ Robert Brose, *The Context of Japanese Imperialism*, Masters Dissertation, American University of Washington D.C., 2003, p. 34.

⁷⁴ W. G. Beasley, "The Edo Experience and Japanese Nationalism" in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 4, Special Issue: Edo Culture and Its Modern Legacy (1984), pp. 556-564. The distinguished historian Hilary Conroy suggests that the Japanese notion of uniqueness had instilled a consolidated national identity long before the Restoration. Adherence to the imperial system and to traditional nativist beliefs had forged a widespread sense of shared belongingness and nationalism. See Hilary Conroy, "Japanese Nationalism and Expansionism" in *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (Jul., 1955), pp. 821-823.

⁷⁵ Herbert Norman, *La nascita del Giappone moderno: Il ruolo dello stato nella transizione dal feudalesimo al capitalismo*, (Turin, 1975), pp. 100, 223-225.

⁷⁶ In a society nurtured for centuries under the ideal of martial valour (Bushidō), militarism was widely endorsed almost to the point of religious tradition. The author and politician Nitobe Inazō (1862-1933) explained in these terms the outcome of the Sino-Japanese war: "What won the battles on the Yalu, in Korea and Manchuria were the ghosts of our fathers, guiding our hands and beating in our hearts...Bushidō as an independent code of ethics may vanish, but its power will not perish from the earth". Under state Shintō many imperial shrines were dedicated to the god of War Hachiman and shrines were even dedicated to glorify the spirit of Hideyoshi. In the late 19th century Meiji leaders

expense of fellow Asian nations.⁷⁷ Many influential scholars, publicists and military officers urged Tōkyō to expand on the Asiatic continent and the Pacific as a pre-emptive strategic move to secure national wealth. In the 1860s and even after the inspiring accomplishment of the Restoration these manifestations could not be transformed into official policy. However, these views hold historical significance as they constitute the first concrete Japanese aspirations overseas. In 1875 Hayashi Shihei completed a geographical survey of Korea, the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō. The last one in particular had to be developed as a bulwark to the Russian threat but all three regions had to be acquired for strategic reasons. They would function as bases to “be ready for the time when Japan’s brave samurai raise troops and enter these three countries”.⁷⁸

As already presented, Satō Nabuhiro had already envisaged a plan of world domination. For him Japan was the first country created and as foundation of every other country its place in the world had to be restored. Japan’s destiny was to incorporate every other country (the Ryūkyūs, Philipines, Indonesia, Russian East Asia, China, India...). The Chinese were cowardly and disorganized so Manchuria should be attacked by a Japanese force wintering in Karafuto. After Manchuria, Nanjing was to be captured. Then the whole of China would surely fall under Japan’s grip. The locals had to be treated and ruled fairly to facilitate their incorporation into the empire; in case of insubordination they had to be massacred according to the Will of Heaven.⁷⁹ Chinese resources and manpower coupled with Japan’s military ability would render world conquest feasible. In 1861 Daimyo Itakura Katsukiyo (1823-1889) proposed to the shogunate government a similar plan. He suggested that the government moved swiftly to take advantage of the Chinese defeat in the Second Opium War (1856-1860) in the hands of the British and French expeditionary forces. Armies had to be dispatched in Taiwan, Korea, Shandong and the welfare of the

regarded militarism as synonymous to legitimacy, survival and power. It became clear to them that all great nations were militaristic. See E. E. N. Causton, *Militarism and Foreign Policy in Japan*, (London, 1936), pp. 20-33.

⁷⁷ Enrica Colloti Pischel, “Considerazioni sull’ascesa del Giappone nel gioco delle grandi potenze” in *L’ascesa del Giappone*, ed. E. C. Pischel, S. Pigrucci, (Milan, 1994), pp. 218-223.

⁷⁸ Donald Calman, *The Nature and Origins of Japanese Imperialism: A Re-interpretation of the 1873 Crisis*, (London-New York, 1992), 57-58.

⁷⁹ Elaborating on this concept Daimyo Hotta Masayoshi commented in March 1858: “When our power and national standing have come to be recognized, we should take the lead in punishing the nation which may act contrary to the principle of international interests; and in so doing, we should join hands with the nations whose principles may be found identical with those of our country.... Such a policy could be nothing else but enforcement of the power and authority deputed (to us) by the Spirit of Heaven. Our national prestige and position thus ensured, the nations of the world will come to look up to our Emperor as the Great Ruler of all nations, and they will come to follow our policy and submit themselves to our judgment”. Additionally, Iwakura Tomomi in a 1869 memorandum expressed his conviction that “all countries beyond the seas are our enemies”. See Robert T. Pollard, “Dynamics of Japanese Imperialism” in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Mar., 1939), p. 20.

locals secured. Tsushima's Confucian scholar Yamada Hōkoku⁸⁰ and Ōshima Tomonojō, anxious to resolve their domain's economic problems, were also envisioning a Korean-Manchuria-Taiwan invasion in 1863, following Itakura's ideas.⁸¹

Naturally, Korea due to its proximity and Hideyoshi's legacy was the target of the majority of the early Japanese territorial aspirations. Maki Yasuomi or Maki Izumi (1813-1864), a samurai, advocated the expulsion of every foreigner from the sacred Japanese soil and the conversion of Korea, Manchuria and the Philippines to vassal states. In October 1869 the Daijōkan instructed the foreign Ministry official Sada Hakuho (Motoichiro) to lead an investigating mission in Korea. He visited the trading post in Pusan. In his report he recommended pre-empting the Westerners and occupying Korea,⁸² but only as a base for further penetration in central Asia. This task would be easy since the Korean government was corrupt and highly unpopular. As he claimed in spring 1870 this country was Japan's traditional vassal⁸³ and thus "...we can massacre Korea with a single stroke, polish our military system, and demonstrate to the world the imperial glory".⁸⁴ More than that, Korean was seen as a "goldmine"; its wheat, grains and rice were invaluable to Tōkyō.⁸⁵ Furthermore, the Koreans were to be pressed into forced labour in the underdeveloped Hokkaidō for the greater good of the Japanese nation. It was the revival of Hideyoshi's programme⁸⁶ Sada's Deputy Shigeru Moriyama devised precise military plans for the invasion. The permanent

⁸⁰ At the time, Yamada seemed to influence the military instructor Mori Shigenobu on his expansionist views. The latter declared in the early 1860s that Japan had to attack China as a: "strategy of averting internal crisis by an overseas campaign". Ōshima Tomonojō devised plans for the attack and on 13 June 1863 met with the advocate of naval expansion Katsu Kaishū to convince him. On 16 July Katsu submitted his invasion proposal to the Bakufu councillors. The outbreak of the Chōshū-bakufu war in late August cancelled these plans. See Key-Hiuk Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order: Korea, Japan, and the Chinese Empire, 1860-1882*, (London, 1980), pp. 83-97.

⁸¹ Calman, *The Nature and Origins*, pp. 68-69.

⁸² In October 1869, a French advisor to the Foreign Ministry warned that the Russians would try to establish their presence in Sakhalin and Korea. Miyamoto Okazu's, the Ministry's official, comment on the matter was that if Korea was lost, an "everlasting harm" would befall on Japan. See Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword*, pp. 33-34.

⁸³ Miyamoto Okazu towards the end of 1869 also considered Korea a tributary nation of ancient Japan. Korea if abandoned would be seized by the Russians who constituted a serious threat to Japan and so Tōkyō had to exercise its ancient claims there. See Kim, *The Last Phase*, p. 133.

⁸⁴ Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword*, 34-36.

⁸⁵ This argument was prevalent throughout the years. In 1885 during the Sino-Japanese negotiations in regard to Korea, Itō Hirobumi stressed the importance of this country for Tōkyō. Korea was able to make up for the lacking domestic rice production and offer employment to the future sons of Japan. See Norman, *La nascita del Giappone*, pp. 230-231.

⁸⁶ Calman points to the anachronism of Japanese imperialism and stresses that this was not a reaction to contemporary conditions and cannot be explained by the fact that the state was formed amidst the apogee of economic and military antagonism. He reached the conclusion that Hideyoshi and the 19th century Meiji leaders similarly utilized war to safeguard their standing and saw expansion as a solution to domestic issues after the two unifications: in both occasions, there were impulsive unemployed masses of samurai, agrarian riots and economic depression. See Calman, *The Nature and Origins*, pp. 194-195.

occupation of Korea appeared to be the solution to the nation's fiscal and social problems. Moriyama urged the unemployed, destitute, and turbulent, for the government, samurai to migrate and find employment, chiefly as a police force, across the Tsushima Strait.⁸⁷ The government was naturally reluctant or unprepared to adopt these recommendations. In April 1881 former Foreign Minister Maruyama Sakura (1840-1899) became co-founder of the Chūaisha, a political organization that established a preparatory school for the army in order to promote militarism. Talking about the annexation of Korea and the northern islands he appealed for a holy war to conquer the world: "Our Emperor is not just the Emperor of these islands but the Great Emperor of the six continents...if you don't have the spirit to swallow the six continents, how can one really revere that one person?". The army's Chief of Staff Viscount Kawakami Sōroku (1848-1899), the director of Chūaisha, laid war plans and planted a spy network in Korea and China. When war actually broke out in 1894 with China a thrilled Muruyama rushed to Korea to lecture the troops on Japan's legacy there, to encourage them and to hold ceremonies for the dead. The soldiers ought to die for the Emperor's glory and by doing so they would become gods. Similarly, when war came Fukuzawa Yukichi exclaimed: "My happiness is so intense there is nothing I can do but shed tears". In 1882 Sasa Tomofusa established another association (Shimei Gakukai) dedicated to the teaching of ethics and martial preparation. The society was granted 500 yen by the emperor in May 1883 and was visited frequently by prominent guests from the army and government. After 1882 many of Sasa's students were dispatched as "part spies, part merchants" to gather information on Japan's future targets. Additionally, when the General Staff was separated from the Army Ministry in December 1878 two distinct offices were formed in the Kanto and Kansai regions responsible for "national defence and strategy". Besides their domestic functions the Kansai branch was responsible for intelligence gathering and pre-war planning for China and Korea whereas the Kanto office kept an eye on Hokkaidō, Karafuto, Manchuria and Siberia.⁸⁸

Another Japanese hero, Saigō Takamori envisioned imperial expansion on the continental mainland. His contemporary Sakai Gendan disclosed in a letter dated 9 January 1874 that Saigō viewed the defence of Hokkaidō, the settling of the Korean problem and the attack in Siberia as a response to the Russian challenge.⁸⁹ Both Sakamoto Ryōma (1836-1867) and Yoshida Shōin urged for the occupation of the small island of Takeshima between Japan and Korea in the Sea of Japan as a base from which Tōkyō was to penetrate Korea and Manchuria. The statesman Kido Takayoshi proposed a similar plan in the 1860s.⁹⁰ As early as 1854 Shōin had devised

⁸⁷ Ibid., pp. 95-99.

⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 285-289.

⁸⁹ Ibid., pp. 150-157.

⁹⁰ He suggested the colonization of the Ulleung-do Island (Utsuryo), just north of Takeshima as a foothold for an invasion in Korea. For him the attack was primarily a solution to domestic problems; it would end political fragmentation and would assert the new government's authority. He claimed in July 1870: "we must make a resolute decision, and therefore we must quickly prepare soldiers,

a great project of colonial expansion. Russia was to be deprived of its Asian possessions, Korea, Manchuria, Taiwan and the Philippines were to be attacked and finally Australia⁹¹ was to be invaded by Japanese colonists.⁹² In the middle of the 19th century, far ahead of his time he envisioned greater Japan as a world power and came up with a plan for its realization.⁹³ Shōin's contemporary, the samurai Sanai Hashimoto (1834-1859) advocated for a war against Britain, the most dangerous nation in his view. Then Japan would acquire India, Manchuria, Korea and parts of North America. To him even a defeat would be invigorating since "a nation can only attain glory and prosperity after having risked her existence and having successfully passed through great national crises".⁹⁴

The statesman Etō Shimpei also perpetuated the idea of an attack to Korea and China, making Beijing the Japanese capital. China could be carved up jointly by Tōkyō and Saint Petersburg. His 1871 "Foreign policy plan" to Iwakura suggested that a European war was at hand and Japan should patiently wait to profit from its spoils. Etō's follower Yamanaka Ichiro, after his European tour presented the government with a report in 1873. He tried to divert colonial aspiration towards Southern Pacific and Oceania. For instance, whereas Japan had a population of 40 million Australia had just 4 million. Therefore, all that Tōkyō had to do was to train 100,000 men and send them to colonize the island. The plan of colonizing the south was further elaborated by the liberal politician, Count Gotō Shōjirō, one of the first to envision Japanese presence in the Celebes, Borneo and Sumatra in 1863. He even tried to acquire land for this purpose in Borneo but failed.⁹⁵ It appears that many, if not the majority, of the Meiji leaders endorsed the widespread imperialistic axiom of the late 19th century. As early as 1879 Prince Katsura Tarō (1848-1913), who was to become Prime Minister in 1901, was sent on an intelligence mission to China by

warships, military supplies and weapons". Moriyama Shigeru attempted to occupy the island for this purpose in 1869. See Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword*, pp. 32-36.

⁹¹ In regard to Australia, the geographer Shige Shigetaka and the journalist Mishima Kazuo limited the scope of their ambitions to the commercial sector on a much later date in 1887. On 3 May 1894 Watanabe Kanjūrō, after months of surveying the country while undercover, submitted an accurate report to Foreign Minister Mutsu of the island's geography and conditions. See Henry Frei, "Japan discovers Australia: the emergence of Australia in the Japanese world view, 1540s-1900" in *The Pacific World, Lands, Peoples and History of the Pacific 1500-1900*, ed. M. Caprio, K. Matsuda, (Hampshire, 2007), pp. 22-32.

⁹² For Shōin Japan despite its critical political and financial position in the 1860s had to urgently complete its military preparations by amassing the necessary warships and war material for its territorial aggrandizement. According to his strategy Hokkaidō had to be colonized first. Next the peninsula of Kamchatka and the Sea of Okhotsk had to be placed under Japanese rule. Korea had to pay tribute just like in the ancient times and be punished for its insolence; it had neglected her vassalage duties towards Japan. Manchuria, Taiwan and Philippines were to follow. See Yoshi S. Kuno, *Japanese Expansion on the Asiatic Continent. A Study in the History of Japan with Special Reference to Her International Relations with China, Korea, and Russia*, Vol. 2, (Berkeley, 1940), pp. 352-353.

⁹³ H. J. Timperley "Yoshida Shoin Martyred Prophet of Japanese Expansionism" in *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Aug., 1942), pp. 346-347.

⁹⁴ Kuno, *Japanese Expansion*, Vol. 2, pp. 356-357.

⁹⁵ Calman, *The Nature and Origins*, pp. 283-291.

Prince Yamagata Aritomo, Field Marshal of the Imperial Japanese Army. Former Foreign Minister, Soejima Taneomi in order to justify the 1894 Japanese aggression referred to Empress Jingū's invasion and claimed: "All historians know that the claims of Japan [to Korea] were earlier [than China's] in origin and had been exercised for a longer space of time".⁹⁶ The historian Naitō Torajirō (1866-1934) in 1888 stressed the necessity of expansion to thwart the overpopulation problem back home. More territory and markets were needed. Korea was not sufficient. He urged his government to increase its influence in China, by acquiring navigation and mining rights particularly in the Fukien region. To the ultra-nationalist Naitō, the Chinese were "filthy", "crime-ridden", an "inferior race" and a "fallen nation". Furthermore, he argued the occupation of Manchuria, as source of foodstuff, over the saturated Philippines or South China.⁹⁷

Another ideological vehicle for expansion was also the Pan-Asianism theory. Comparable to the West's civilization mission, it was the axiom of bringing to the corroded and backward Asian populations progress through reform as Japan had previously achieved for itself. The Pan-Asianism doctrine emphasized the need for Asian unity against foreign influences, highlighting the common cultural traditions in a way similar to the Pan-Slavism theory. The movement stressed the Asian peoples' shared historical experience, language, scriptures, culture, geography and religion.⁹⁸ It was also implemented to legitimize Japanese hegemony and colonial rule. Ideologically it is considered the precursor of the 1930s creeds, New Order in Asia and Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Asianism is a "claim that demands a union of Asian peoples (sho-minzoku) under the leadership of Japan to resist to the aggression (shinryaku) of European and American powers" and it could manifest itself either as right wing or left wing extremism.⁹⁹ The Japanese as superiors and more virtuous had the moral responsibility to conquer and enlighten the less fortunate nations. Thus, the holy mission to "liberate Asia"¹⁰⁰ was in fact the extension of Japanese nationalism overseas, to peoples that had the same physical traits. Japan

⁹⁶ Michael Montgomery, *Imperialist Japan: The Yen to Dominate*, (London, 1987), pp. 143-147.

⁹⁷ Shumpei Okamoto, "A Phase of Meiji Japan's Attitude toward China: The Case of Komura Jutarō" in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (1979), pp. 444-446.

⁹⁸ In the early 20th century Japanese archaeological missions, studying local artefacts "discovered" that in Paleolithic times Manchuria, Korea and Japan were inhabited by the same "ancient eastern race". This theory was endorsed by the historian Shiratori Kurakichi (1865-1942). He claimed that the Koreans, who originated from parts of Manchuria, were related to the Japanese race a fact that justified the Japanese return to their ancestral home in Manchuria. See Miwa Kimitada, *Nitobe Inazō and the development of colonial theories and practices in prewar Japan*, Research papers, Series A-50 1987, Sophia University Tokyo p. 13.

⁹⁹ Saaler, *Pan-Asianism in Meiji*, p. 11.

¹⁰⁰ The authors Kanokogi Kazunobu (1884-1949), Shūmei Ōkawa (1886-1957) and Ikki Kita (1883-1937) spoke of a divine Japanese mission to liberate Asia. Moreover Tokutomi Sohō advised Japan to establish an "Asian Monroe Doctrine" to safeguard the continent from the imperialist greed. See Christopher W. A. Szpilman and Sven Saaler, "Pan-Asianism as an Ideal of Asian Identity and Solidarity, 1850–Present アジアの主体性・団結の理想としての汎アジア主義—1850 年から 今日まで in *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Apr., 2011), p. 8.

volunteered to lead the Asian nations, respecting not destroying local traditions as the West has been doing outside Europe.¹⁰¹ For the Pan-Asianists, Japanese expansion was different from Western aggressiveness since it derived from “pure patriotism”.¹⁰²

In view of the dangers that western imperialism represented some scholars advocated for the alliance of the Asian states. Others, as Fukuzawa, proposed the disengagement from the continent and the collaboration with the imperialistic powers. Katsu Kaishū a Bakufu official had proposed a Sino-Japanese alliance as early as the 1860s, a view embraced by the politician Sugita Teichi (1851-1929) in the 1870s.¹⁰³ Political organizations, that preached Asian solidarity and fraternity against the White Peril,¹⁰⁴ criticized the government for its foreign policy decisions; Tōkyō imprisoned advocates of Pan-Asian rhetoric and tried to suppress the movement that seemed to fuel the West’s Yellow Peril suspicions. However, the organization Kōa-Kai (Society for Raising Asia) founded in 1880, and its successor in 1883 Ajia Kyōkai (Asia Association) enjoyed the protection of prominent government members.¹⁰⁵ Kōa-Kai was based in Tōkyō but soon established branches all over Japan, Korea and China. It was primarily the work of Sone Toshitora (1847-1910) who in 1877 had established the Shin’a-Kai (Association for the Advance of Asia). Kōa-Kai was created to promote collaboration between Tōkyō and Beijing, resist the West and advance Asian interests. The organization published its own journal,¹⁰⁶ revolving around the region’s political and economic matters, and set up a Chinese Language school in its headquarters. The Association’s membership was comprised of royals, such as Prince Komatsu Akihito (1846-1903), diplomats of the Foreign Ministry, navy and army officers and editors, a total of 400 members in 1881. By 1882 26 Chinese were also admitted. When it came to Korea the Japanese members retained an ambiguous position. Many of them forgot all about Asian fraternity, considered Korea too weak for independence and supported the Japanese claims, citing the Jingū-kōgō and

¹⁰¹ Prasenjit Duara, “The Discourse of Civilization and Pan-Asianism” in *Journal of World History*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Spring, 2001), p. 110.

¹⁰² Hilary Conroy, “Government versus ‘Patriot’: The Background of Japan’s Asiatic Expansion” in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Feb., 1951), p. 39.

¹⁰³ Yukie Yoshikawa, *Japan’s Asianism, 1868-1945, Dilemmas of Japanese Modernization*, (Washington D.C., 2009), pp. 22-23.

¹⁰⁴ The fear of subjugation to the West. This notion contradicted the Yellow Peril fantasy of barbarian hordes from Asia that would burn, rape, pillage and destroy European civilization. See Jean-Pierre Lehmann, *The Image of Japan: From Feudal Isolation to World Power 1850-1905*, (Abingdon 1978), pp. 149-151.

¹⁰⁵ Sven Saaler, “Pan-Asianism in modern Japanese history: overcoming the nation, creating a region, forging an empire” in *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History. Colonialism, regionalism and borders* ed. S. Saaler and J. V. Koschmann, (New York 2007), pp. 2-7.

¹⁰⁶ Many editorials pointed out the importance of commercial interactions in East Asia. However, after a British force invaded Egypt to extinguish the national independence movement in September 1882 the Kōa-Kai October issue criticized the West’s military intervention in a fellow “oriental” nation. See Kuroki Morifumi, “The Asianism of the Kōa-Kai and the Ajia Kyokai: reconsidering the ambiguity of Asianism” in *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History. Colonialism, regionalism and borders* ed. S. Saaler and J. V. Koschmann, (New York 2007), p. 45.

Hideyoshi's legacies.¹⁰⁷ For the philosopher Miyake Setsurei Japan should advance the "cause of goodness" by using its military strength to defend its weaker Asian neighbours from western encroachment.¹⁰⁸ However, the statesman Shimada Saburo (1852-1923) demanded a showdown with the Chinese over Korea in order to demonstrate which state was the leader in the region. Komura Jutarō (1855-1911), the Japanese Minister in Beijing in 1893 was pessimistic about Chinese prospects of modernization. A weak China that attracted western incursions was a danger to Japan's sovereignty. To counter this situation he believed Tōkyō had to build up its military forces and join the struggle for territorial expansion in China.¹⁰⁹

Japan's adjacent territories in Korea and China were provokingly tempting to anyone who had any sort of military capability and nurtured colonial aspirations. Since control of Korea by a Western power would be detrimental not only for Japan's interests but, as many publicists and activists saw it, to Japanese independence as well, Tōkyō saw the need to pre-empt other colonial suitors. China and Korea could always reform their outdated ways and embrace western administration and military models to resist any foreign encroachment but this process required resources and precious time. Many Japanese expressed the idea that greater Japanese influence in Korea and Manchuria would help protect the native peoples from western domination, while also protecting Tōkyō's interest.¹¹⁰ The fear of western imperialism from the mid-19th century was so deeply ingrained in Japanese consciousness that the search for national security never really came to a halt.¹¹¹ Every victory brought more military preparations; every enlargement meant more buffer areas: Japan necessitated a Japanese Korea for its security, Japanese Korea a Japanese Manchuria, Japanese Manchuria a Japanese Mongolia and so on and so forth until 1945. To head Western encroachment off, Japan needed to take the initiative, and take control over an ever widening sphere of influence. The "concentric circles" of expansion was a theory elaborated by Tokutomi, Kita Terujirō (Kita Ikki 1883-1937) and Nitobe.¹¹² Tokutomi

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., pp. 36-43.

¹⁰⁸ Mark Lincicome, *Imperial Subjects as Global Citizens: Nationalism, Internationalism, and Education in Japan*, (New York, 2009), pp. 17-18.

¹⁰⁹ Okamoto, "A Phase of Meiji Japan's Attitude", pp. 450-454.

¹¹⁰ Defining the "others" contributed to the formation of a domestic national awareness. For example, Matsubara Iwagorō's 1893 report after his return from Korea conveyed a sense of backwardness of the local population, useful to exalt Japanese modernization and progress. The Chinese and Koreans were often depicted in editorials and reports as pathetic, filthy, uncultured and ignorant, in dire need of Japanese leadership and protection. See Saya Makito, *The Sino-Japanese War and the Birth of Japanese Nationalism*, (Tokyo 2011), pp. 34-38.

¹¹¹ Kido Takayoshi claimed in 1868 that Japan had to build up its military to "deal with the Great Powers as potential enemies". He continued "One cannot depend on international law without having a well-prepared military force". In 1880 Yamagata shared Kido's anxiety: "The Western states compete with each other over their weapons, each vying to overtake another...they are like greedy wolves and eye each other like tigers, trying to take advantage of the slightest chance present to them". See Shogo Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire: China and Japan's Encounter with European International Society*, (New York, 2009), pp. 80-82.

¹¹² Kinitada, *Nitobe Inazō*, pp. 12-13.

believed that a nation that did not expand was destined to perish. Commenting on imperialism, he stressed: “It is a policy born out of necessity if we are to exist as a nation and survive as a race”.¹¹³ The writer Ukita Kazutami, (1859-1946) stated in 1902 that imperialism should be seen as a superior way to build national strength. The controversial historian Karl Ernst Haushofer (1869-1946) concurred: “Weighting... the forces behind Japan’s expansion drive, we must admit that they did not develop out of the need of the moment but out of concern for the distant future”.¹¹⁴

Religion too played a certain role in creating a pro-colonial disposition. For the historian William Lockwood Japan’s emergence as a colonial power seemed to stem from the contemporary society’s indoctrination with a mystical faith in the imperial destiny. The Tokugawa period of seclusion meant that Japan had cut off its intellectual and cultural ties with the mainland for more than two centuries. The Tokugawa period saw a wide variety of religious and philosophical movements, including the encouragement of *kokugaku*, the research of native studies, which exalted spiritual superiority and thus Japanese nationalism in contrast to the corrupted foreign ways. To the followers of scholars, such as Motoori Norinaga and Hirata Atsutane, Japan, contrary to the ancient sinocentric system, was the centre of the universe; the emperor was the emperor of the entire world, and all the Japanese, as descendants of the gods, were superior beings. China’s military defeats and economic subjugation to the West appeared as a confirmation of Japan’s ascension to Asia’s supreme cultural position. The scholar Ōkuni Takamasa (1792-1871) wished to restore the world to the imperial way, even by conquest. To Hirata foreigners were “insects”, a distasteful euphemism for the term barbarian.¹¹⁵ Finally a Shintō sect called Ōmoto is also considered a promoter of territorial expansion. Founded in 1892 as a response to the official Shintō, which was deemed as corrupted and decadent, this new religion taught moral values, pacifism and virtue. Still, the sect’s leader Deguchi Onisaburō (1871-1948) aspired to make it a world religion centered around divine Japan. Universalism was combined with ethnocentrism. The world had to be unified under Japan that was predestined to diffuse Ōmoto, the universal truth, to the four corners of the globe. In this respect Tōkyō’s territorial acquisitions were not incompatible to universal pacifism. They were to be used as advanced bases for

¹¹³ On another occasion, he urged his government: “to extend the blessings of political organization throughout the rest of East Asia and the South Pacific, just as the Romans had once done for Europe and the Mediterranean”. See Peattie, “Japanese Attitudes”, pp. 81-82. In his effort to depict the world as a battleground in which Japan had to decisively and swiftly act for its survival Tokutomi blended traditional Confucian values with the theory of evolution. See Douglas Howland, “Society Reified: Herbert Spencer and Political Theory in Early Meiji Japan” in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (Jan., 2000), pp. 76-77. In August 1894 Tokutomi wrote: “Why do some Japanese say we fight in order to reform Korea, or to vanquish Peking, or to establish a huge indemnity? They should realize that we are fighting to determinate once and for all Japan’s position in the world...”. See Lincicome, *Imperial Subjects*, pp. 16-17.

¹¹⁴ Marius B. Jansen, “Japanese Imperialism: Late Meiji Perspectives” in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*, ed. R. H. Myers, M. R. Peattie, (New Jersey, 1984), pp. 66-67.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 60-63.

missionary work.¹¹⁶ Naturally Shintō did not have a monopoly on ultranationalistic rhetoric, there were also ultranationalistic aspects in Nichiren Buddhism.¹¹⁷

The new education institutions established under the Meiji instilled as supreme values extreme loyalty, self-sacrifice and undisputable religious reverence towards the throne.¹¹⁸ Despite the nation's prehistoric ancestral "purity", when it came to foreign populations under Japanese domination the "family" could extend to include these new subjects transforming them into "imperial peoples"; they were adopted not as brothers but as obedient children. Centuries of isolation and cultural submission to the Chinese had created an inferiority complex,¹¹⁹ which was now gradually being reversed by the reactionary notion of racial uniqueness reinforced by the imported concept of Social Darwinism.¹²⁰ If the West excelled by embracing the Social Darwinism and colonial doctrines, then Japan had to follow its lead in order to enter the restricted club of imperial powers and secure its independence.¹²¹ The language of the new imperialism was keenly adopted: colonies,¹²² balance of power, protectorates,

¹¹⁶ Li Narangoa, "Universal values and Pan-Asianism: the vision of Ōmoto-kyō" in *Modern Japanese History. Colonialism, regionalism and borders* ed. S. Saaler and J. V. Koschmann, (New York 2007), pp. 52-54.

¹¹⁷ For the Buddhists of the Nichiren sect Japan was "superior to India, China and eighty thousand other countries". Nichiren through Japan had the duty to proselytize and transform the world into a vast Bouddhaland. See Takashi James Kōdera, "Nichiren and His Nationalistic Eschatology" in *Religious Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Mar., 1979), pp. 41-42. For the Buddhist priest Tanaka Chigaku (1861-1939) Japan had "the heavenly mandate to unite the world". Russian and German imperial aspirations were selfish and insincere. Only Japan was righteous enough to spread Nichiren and guide the world towards peace and harmony according to Tanaka. See Edwin B. Lee, "Nichiren and Nationalism. The Religious Patriotism of Tanaka Chigaku" in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Spring, 1975), pp. 21-30.

¹¹⁸ Mark E. Lincicome, "Nationalism, Imperialism, and the International Education Movement in Early Twentieth Century Japan" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 2 (May, 1999), pp. 338-340.

¹¹⁹ The academic Hiroyuki Katō (1836-1916) and the philosopher Tetsujirō Inoue (1855-1944) found the Japanese racially superior to other Asians but inferior to the Caucasians in Social Darwinian terms. They feared that the "struggle for survival" would mean the eradication of the Japanese race. Inoue pointed out that many small island nations in the Pacific had perished soon after Europeans appeared. Katō suggested expansion, loyalty to the throne and ardent militarism to balance his nation's inadequacy. See Hiroshi Unoura, "Samurai Darwinism: Hiroyuki Katō and the reception of Darwin's theory in modern Japan from the 1880s to the 1900s" in *History and Anthropology*, Vol. 11, No. 2-3, pp. 242-245.

¹²⁰ Mark R. Peattie, "Introduction" in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*, ed. R. H. Myers, M. R. Peattie, (New Jersey, 1984), pp. 12-13.

¹²¹ In 1887 Inoue Kaoru, the Foreign Minister claimed: "In my opinion what we must do is to transform our empire and our people, make the empire like the countries of Europe and our people like the peoples of Europe. To put it differently, we have to establish a new, European style empire on the edge of Asia". See Jansen, "Japanese Imperialism", p. 64.

¹²² The term "Shokumin" meaning settlement or colonization and later synonymous to colonial rule was first cited in an English-Japanese dictionary in 1862. The Latin word "colonia", from which the word colony derives, means "to settle in a remote place and cultivate the land". According to the scholar Tadao Yanaihara (1893-1961) shokuminchi (colony) means "a place in which people are planted" and a "place in which settlers or colonists plant themselves". See Ryoko Nakano, "Uncovering "Shokumin": Yanaihara Tadao's Concept of Global Civil Society" in *Social Science Japan Journal*, Vol. 9 No. 2 (Oct. 2006), p. 192.

enclaves, military and naval bases, search for markets, centres of trade, investment possibilities, raw materials. In Japan's case, the civilizing mission was paraphrased as the Yellow Man's burden. The "national necessity" scheme, with its requirement for new territories, was also adopted from European promoters of imperialism.¹²³ Tōkyō had to resolve pressing issues such as the consolidation of the new state, the construction of modern infrastructure and the partial transformation of an outdated agricultural economy to a capitalistic and industrial one. Social issues such as the abolition of domains, political representation and the samurai stipends needed immediate resolution after the civil war as they constituted a potential threat to the new government.¹²⁴ Despite these pressing issues, the Japanese government acted positively towards opportunities for overseas expansion throughout the Meiji period.

While economic considerations certainly weighted on the minds of the Meiji policy planners, economics cannot be considered as the main stimuli for expansion at the time. In the late 1890s Japan took indeed noteworthy steps towards industrialization but it largely remained an agrarian country. In any case the Japanese products could not compete internationally with those of the Western manufacturers. At that time, Tōkyō was able to penetrate economically only Korea and China, the El Dorado of Japanese trading and shipping interests: shipping costs were obviously lower for Japanese manufacturers compared to their Western counterparts.¹²⁵ In brief, the Japanese state in the 1870s-1890s being agrarian and relatively underdeveloped was far from approaching the capitalistic maturity levels required to be considered by Lenin's disciples imperialistic. Japan was lacking domestic capital and was nowhere near forming a "monopolistic capitalism in its final stage".¹²⁶ Without dynamic industry there was no actual need for raw materials or overseas markets. However, Tōkyō resting on a rather weak and backward economic base took part in the expansionistic struggle as much as other, more prosperous, rivals. Hence, any rhetoric pertaining to national economy cannot illustrate the motives of early Japanese colonialism. This "anomaly" partially explains the lack of western studies on the early Japanese colonial phenomenon that paved the way for the later expansion. As a matter of fact, the colonial expert David Fieldhouse among others, totally neglected Japan's overseas possessions in his momentous work.

The Miyazaki brothers (Yazō, Tamizō, Tōten) in the closing years of the 19th century belonged to a small minority that criticized the government's imperialistic attitudes and the concept of expansion in general. Tōten or Torazō, especially, demonstrated sincere solidarity towards China which he saw as being a fellow victim of colonial machinations. According to Tōten Tōkyō should have assisted Beijing in

¹²³ Tatsuo Kawai, *The Goal of Japanese Expansion*, (Tokyo, 1938), pp. 31-32.

¹²⁴ Harry D. Harootunian, "The Economic Rehabilitation of the Samurai in the Early Meiji Period" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Aug., 1960), pp. 434-435.

¹²⁵ Peter Duus, "Introduction-Japan's Informal Empire in China, 1895-1937: An Overview" in *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895-1937*, ed. P. Duus, R. H. Myers, and M. R. Peattie, (Princeton, 1989), pp. 19-21.

¹²⁶ Peattie, "Introduction", pp. 11-12

its modernization efforts and in order to fend off the ravenous West in unison with Japan.¹²⁷ In 1874 Ueki Emori (1857–1892), one of the few sincere pacifists, called for the creation of an Asian League championing the independence and equality of every Asian region.¹²⁸ The socialist Kōtoku Shūsui (1871–1911) rejected Japanese expansion and militarism on humanitarian grounds. Kōtoku suggested that the government’s pompous but pointless imperialistic enterprise was distracting his countrymen from the actual social issues at home.¹²⁹ However, when war with Qing China came he united his voice with the Christian, and allegedly, pacifist Uchimura Kanzō (1861–1930) in proclaiming it a war of “justice”, “civilization” and “humanity.”¹³⁰ Nakae Chōmin (1847–1901) another prominent liberal, dreamed of defeating Russia and expanding at its expense.¹³¹ Finally the activist Ōi Kentarō is a pragmatic example of the Japanese liberalism’s weakness in Meiji Japan. An idealist and a proponent of liberal reforms at home, he contributed to the expansionistic rationale of the “tyrannical” and “selfish” Tōkyō government.¹³² In 1884 he raised money and weapons and in October 1885 his private army of trouble makers was ready to embark for Korea. On 2 November 1885, the police arrested 130 adventurers interfering with Ōi’s plan (Ōsaka Incident). These “heroes” were to enlighten Korea and in case of failure their death was to bring national condemnation for Tōkyō’s anti-liberal and passive stance. In any case their activities would destabilize Korea and give a pretext for intervention to Japan. Using this elaborate scheme Tōkyō would extend its influence over the peninsula.¹³³

In Meiji Japan, the tendency for expansion developed virtually unhindered by liberals, anarchists and idealists. Cases of dissidents are rather rare since the broad base of the population, be them the ruling classes or the lower ones, were convinced of the benefits imperialism and militarism had to offer. Even Home Minister Ōkubo Toshimichi certainly not a liberal but a politician known for his cool-temper promoted war with Russia in September 1869 to “rouse the hearts of the people of the realm”, to assert “imperial prestige” and to “spread the glory of the Imperial House to the outside world”.¹³⁴ Besides this was the age of expansion.¹³⁵ Before the state’s

¹²⁷ Jansen, “Japanese Imperialism”, pp. 74–75.

¹²⁸ Szpilman and Saaler, “Pan-Asianism as an Ideal”, p. 9.

¹²⁹ Jansen, “Japanese Imperialism”, p. 65. As Hobson did before him Kōtoku believed that imperialism and in particular the Japanese participation during the Boxer Rebellion, benefited only some businessmen and the military. Imperialism for him was the product of militarism and jingoistic patriotism. See Fred G. Notehelfer, *Kōtoku Shūsui: Portrait of a Japanese Radical*, (Oxford, 1971), pp. 82, 84.

¹³⁰ Fred G. Notehelfer, “Kotoku Shusui and Nationalism” in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Nov., 1971), p. 35.

¹³¹ Saaler, *Pan-Asianism in Meiji*, pp. 17–18.

¹³² Marius B. Jansen, “Ōi Kentaro: Radicalism and Chauvinism” in *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (May, 1952), p. 307.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 309–310.

¹³⁴ Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword*, pp. 29–30.

¹³⁵ The newspaper *Nichi Nichi* on the eve of the country’s colonial awakening wished that “the Japanese will be able to enter on a heroic career as a strong and enlightened Power in the East” while

formation and throughout the span of the century the Japanese as passive spectators witnessed with fear and wonder the Great Powers establishing their presence in the Far East after having completely absorbed Africa into their empires. The Portuguese were in control of Macao from 1557, the British of Hong Kong from 1841, and after 1884 the French held Tonkin whereas the Russians were gradually approaching the Japanese islands in the north.¹³⁶ Many came to believe that possessing colonies would confer pride and bring about parity with the fellow imperialist powers as Japan would be participating in the illustrious civilizing mission. The writer Takekoshi Yosaburō (1865-1950) in 1907 commented on the matter: “Western nations have long believed that on their shoulders alone rested the responsibility of colonizing the yet-unopened portions of the globe and extending to the inhabitants the benefits of civilization; but now we Japanese, rising from the ocean in the extreme Orient, wish as a nation to take part in this great and glorious work”.¹³⁷

Japan’s first overseas acquisition came as a result of the Sino-Japanese war, the first modern war of the nation in 1895. Beyond territorial aggrandizement the war promoted the Meiji leadership’s nation-building programme. The invention of a common enemy, in this occasion Qing China, fostered national identity, instilled patriotism, rallied the people and distracted them from the more pressing domestic issues. It proved to be a very popular war, one that excited and moved the intelligentsia and the lower echelons of the 1890s society alike. On 24 August 1894 Fukuzawa described it as a war “between civilization and barbarism”. Tōkyō newspapers *Nichi Nichi Shimbun* and *Asahi Shinbun* when the war erupted in August claimed that the Japanese soldiers fought for honour and justice whereas the cowardly Chinese were motivated by the prospect of money.¹³⁸ The periodicals of the time portrayed the ordinary Japanese soldier as a selfless hero, a propaganda that seemed to move the animated readers. Poems published in 1894 mentioned Empress Jingū, the ancient vassal states and Hideyoshi’s campaigns.¹³⁹ Kabuki plays, the traditional Japanese theatre, were composed to exalt “Japan’s Great Victory”. Former samurai volunteered and donations were accumulated to be sent to the front. Every victory was celebrated frantically in local festivals as they sketched a common destiny and a

the *Kokkai* stressed: “Nothing short of a foreign complication can rescue the nation from the plight with which it is now afflicted. The planting of a Japanese flag on some of the South Sea Islands, a fight with China over the Korean Question, a conflict with Austria on the Sea of Japan-any of these events would suffice for the purpose”. See Montgomery, *Imperialist Japan*, p. 141.

¹³⁶ Pollard, “Dynamics of Japanese Imperialism”, pp. 29-30

¹³⁷ Peattie, “Japanese Attitudes”, pp. 82-83.

¹³⁸ On 30 August 1894, the military set restrictions to the war correspondents at the front. When Port Arthur fell in Japanese hands in 21 November, an unprecedented massacre of the city’s residents occurred but Japanese journalists did not pay much attention to the incident. The facts were released by the foreign correspondents who did not depend on the Japanese military for securing their information nor could they be muzzled by censorship. On 14 December, the *Jiji Shimpō* condemned these claims as “baseless rumours of slaughter at Port Arthur”. See Makito, *The Sino-Japanese*, pp. 46-49.

¹³⁹ The third grade’s elementary textbook published in November 1894 included chapters on “Soldiers”, “War song of the Qing Dynasty” and “Empress Jingū”. See *Ibid.*, pp. 128-129.

glorious future. Military parades, battle recreations, religious commemoration for the fallen and construction of war memorials throughout the country followed China's capitulation in April 1895.¹⁴⁰

All of the aforementioned constitutes the 19th century ideological and emotional load instilled in the prospective colonialists' minds. Let us now examine the first truly colonial venture of the Meiji state that paved the way for further aspirations and imperialist schemes. According to the Japanese tradition the Bonin Islands, approximately 1,000 kilometres south of Tōkyō, were discovered by the feudal lord Ogasawara Sadayori in 1593 from whom they took the name Ogasawara Guntō. Allegedly, he was instructed by Hideyoshi to lead an exploration mission to the south islands.¹⁴¹ The scholar of the Tokugawa period, Hayashi Shihei embraced the myth and demanded for the Bakufu to annex and fortify the islands. The Tokugawa authorities were disinterested since the Bonin Islands laid "beyond the jurisdiction of the empire". According to modern historiography the islands were discovered by the Japanese in 1670. In any case it was only after Westerners demonstrated interest about the islands that the government became alarmed. The British captain Frederick William Beechey (1796-1856) declared unilaterally the acquisition of the islands in the name of the British Crown in 1827.¹⁴² Ignoring this claim Commodore Perry proposed the annexation of the island to the US during his 1853-1854 expedition to Japan. A Russian explorer followed.¹⁴³

After many deliberations the Bakufu was convinced to organize an expedition for the colonization of the Bonin in 1861. In October Mizuno Chikugo was selected as the leader of the ambitious endeavour. He fervently started amassing supplies and men interested to migrate. On 17 December 1861 state official Andō Nobumasa (1819-1871) aware of the foreign ambitions on Bonin and of the presence of foreign subjects there informed the American and British Ministers, Harris and Alcock of his government's intentions.¹⁴⁴ The mission departed from Shinagawa on 3 January 1862 and reached Port Lloyd on the 17th. Mizuno's priority was to plant the Japanese flag on the highest peak of the main island. Subsequently he engaged in talks with the Westerners stationed there. To their claim that Bonin had been a British possession from 1827 onwards, Mizuno responded that the islands were discovered by the Japanese 300 years prior to their arrival. He was referring to Ogasawara's alleged

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 114-148.

¹⁴¹ Hyman Kublin, "The Discovery of the Bonin Islands: A Reexamination" in *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (Mar., 1953), p. 30.

¹⁴² The diplomat George Tradescant Lay (1800-1845) on board Beechey's ship at the time saw a great strategic, economic and even spiritual value in these inhabited islands. Under British sovereignty they could become a religious and scientific base for the enlightenment of the adjacent nations. See Silvana De Maio, "La prima colonizzazione occidentale delle Isole Bonin" in *Il Giappone*, Vol. 38 (1998), p. 75.

¹⁴³ Kublin, "The Discovery", pp. 33-40.

¹⁴⁴ Hyman Kublin, "The Ogasawara Venture (1861-1863)" in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1/2 (Jun., 1951), pp. 268-271.

exploration in 1593. After overcoming their objections he enacted legislation as the governor of the newly established Japanese possession. It included naval provisions, prohibition of hunting, Japanese names for locations and landholding restrictions for the settlers. After a brief exploration of the archipelago, Mizuno departed for Japan on 7 April 1862 leaving at his post Obana Sakuranosuke. Upon his arrival in Edo he found out that Alcock had presented on 7 March 1862 a complaint note to the Bakufu authorities asserting the British rights on the Bonins. Mizuno urged his government not to give in. He justified his view by presenting the strategic and economic value of the island chain. Fertile soil, mineral wealth, and lucrative whaling provided opportunities for prosperity almost effortlessly. He even compared Port Lloyd's harbour facilities with the ones situated at Uraga near Edo. The shogunate, encouraged by these reports, rejected Alcock's pretensions on 7 July 1862. On the same day, the American Minister was notified that the settlers did not object to the new administration. In reality the foreign settlers, under threat of expulsion, had already signed declarations accepting Edo's rule. In the same time the Bakufu recruited potential Japanese colonists by promising land, money and supplies. Consequently 38 settlers, mostly peasants, reached Port Lloyd on 19 September. Governor Obana accommodated the newcomers away from the Westerner-led "locals" in order to avoid conflicts and international incidents.¹⁴⁵ After almost a year of peaceful coexistence and arduous agricultural labour the Japanese, on 24 June 1863, were urgently ordered to abandon the settlement.¹⁴⁶ The reasons of this sudden departure are obscure and we can only speculate. In the early 1870s only non-Japanese inhabited the islands and the Ministers of Germany and Britain raised questions regarding Bonin's administration. That was the inglorious end of the first colonial venture in modern Japanese history. The enigmatic evacuation did not signify the relinquishment Japan's sovereignty rights though. The Bonin Islands were officially annexed in 1875 and passed under the direction of the Home Ministry in the following year. In November, the first magistrates after 12 years of inaction assumed the islands' administration; Foreign Minister Terashima Munenori had officially notified the powers a month earlier. The islands came under the jurisdiction of Tōkyō's prefectural government in 1880 and six years later the foreign residents obtained the Japanese citizenship.¹⁴⁷ In this way Japan asserted its claims in an adjustment territory for strategic reasons and not as a result of economic considerations; the value of the barren and almost unpopulated islands was low but their geographical position crucial for Japan's future expansion.

¹⁴⁵ The colonists erected a stone memorial in remembrance of the islands' exploration by Ogasawara Sadayori in 1593. See Russell Robertson, "The Bonin Islands", in *Asiatic Society of Japan, Transactions*, 1st series, No. 4 (1876), p. 117.

¹⁴⁶ Kublin, "The Ogasawara Venture", pp. 273-278.

¹⁴⁷ Hikomatsu Kamikawa, *Japan-American Diplomatic Relations in the Meiji-Taisho Era*, (Tokyo 1958), pp. 100-101.

The Japanese naturally turned their gaze to the Pacific region. The Bonin Islands stirred the imagination as Japan's gateway to the South Seas (Nan'yō).¹⁴⁸ The South Seas were identified as an outstanding source of wealth and an outlet for the nation's surplus population by journalists, diet politicians, former samurai and patriots in general. It was also "res nullius", a region still untouched by Western imperialists and as such available for Tōkyō's early colonization attempts. The Navy exploited the commotion and joined the chorus to advance its own interests and attract further funding for its armaments programme.¹⁴⁹ In the 1880s and 1890s the Navy's training operations in the Pacific brought its cadets in contact with the region. Colonial minded scholars, businessmen and authors were also on board. The first Japanese vessel to enter Micronesia was the *Ryūjō* that docked in the Carolines in autumn 1883. Other warships were subsequently dispatched as far as Australia and South America to show the Japanese flag. The author Shiga Shigetaka (1863-1927) on board the *Tsukuba* in a reconnaissance voyage, visited Samoa, the Fijis, Australia and Hawaii in 1886. Upon his return in 1887 he called for the imminent occupation of an island before the Japanese people's ignorance and Western imperialism rendered this prospect unfeasible. After a similar journey Hattori Tōru (?-1908), a journalist, claimed that the nation's destiny laid in the islands of the South Seas. There the Japanese could realize their mission of civilization and commerce. Citing once more Takekoshi Yosaburō: "Our future lies not in the North, but in the South, not on the continent but on the ocean" and "it is our great task as a people to turn the Pacific into a Japanese lake". Having succumbed to the South Seas fever he concluded rather excessively: "Who controls the tropics controls the world".¹⁵⁰

The popular "political novels" of the time had little scientific value but, excited the imagination, raised interest and awareness for the Nan'yō all the same.¹⁵¹ In these literary works published in the 1890s the natives, following the European practice, were depicted as savages and in need of Japan's intervention to liberate and bring them a higher level of civilization. Furthermore, the authors stressed the affinity of the islanders to the yellow race and their hostility towards the white people. In a romantic way they incited expansionism and legitimated future action.¹⁵² In any case,

¹⁴⁸ In the first Meiji years, the term was used to designate the central Pacific area comprising the Mariana, Caroline, Marshall and Gilbert islands. After Taiwan's annexation Nan'yō was expanded to include Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii and the colonies of Southeast Asia.

¹⁴⁹ In the 1870s the Navy suffered from lack of funding, vessels and experienced crews. The explorations of the late 1880s, the prospect of expansion and the pressure from sympathising groups granted the Navy 18 million yen from the government and a naval defence fund founded by the Emperor. See Charles J. Schencking, "The Imperial Japanese Navy and the Constructed Consciousness of a South Seas Destiny, 1872-1921" in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (Oct., 1999), p. 777.

¹⁵⁰ Mark R. Peattie, "The Nan'yō: Japan in the South Pacific, 1895-1945" in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*, ed. R. H. Myers, M. R. Peattie, (New Jersey, 1984), pp. 179-180.

¹⁵¹ In modern times the first Japanese work devoted to shedding light to the South Seas was Nishikawa Joken's *Zōho Ka-I Tsūshōkō*, published in 1708. See Yong En En, *The Nan'yō Kyōkai and Southeast Asia: 1915-1945*, Masters Dissertation, National University of Singapore 2010, p. 25.

¹⁵² The main theme was the story of a virtuous Japanese that after being shipwrecked found himself in an exotic island. He then conquered the natives with his ingenuity becoming their king and offering the

Meiji Japan despite the grandiose plans concerning America, Hawaii, South East Asia and the Pacific was unable to impose its claims. The world was already carved up. In the Pacific Tōkyō, did not find unclaimed islands and did not obtain one until 1914; by the 1890s France held Tahiti, Britain the Fijis, Spain the Marianas and Carolines and Germany the Marshal islands. This state of affairs though did not discourage the colonial visionaries from dreaming the creation of a “Maritime Empire”.¹⁵³

Enomoto Takeaki had proposed to his government the purchase of some of Spain’s Pacific islands as early as 1876. As Foreign Minister, he approached Madrid to inquire about the possibility of buying the Mariana Islands and Palau. Furthermore, he urged his colleagues to secure Borneo and New Guinea. In 1885 Enomoto established the South Seas Assembly (Nan’yō Kyōkai). Its objectives were to collect information, sponsor exploration missions and act as a pressure group towards the government. In 1887 as Minister of Communications he sponsored an amateur exploration mission in the South Seas which discovered the Volcano Islands southwest of the Bonins. Iwo Jima was annexed two years later.¹⁵⁴ The philosopher Miyake Setsurei commenting on the 1880s’ anxiety revealed that: “At the time the desire for colonies, especially in the South Pacific, was strong... We felt Japan had to acquire territory”. In agreement, Shiga wrote on 3 April 1890: “Every year on the anniversary of Emperor Jimmu’s accession, February 11, and on the anniversary of his passing, April 3... we should ceremonially increase the territory of the Japanese Empire even if only it is by a small measure. On each of these days our navy vessels should sail to a still unclaimed island, occupy it, and hoist the Japanese flag... Not only would such a programme have direct value as practical experience for our navy but it would excite an expeditionary spirit in the demoralized Japanese race”.¹⁵⁵

Early in 1884 a group of Japanese pearl divers were murdered on the atoll of Lae in the Marshalls. A passing British vessel discovered their remains and reported their untimely demise back to Tōkyō. Gotō Taketarō and Suzuki Tsunenori were dispatched to investigate the case. On 23 September 1884, they reached the Marshalls. They studied the population’s customs, its density and the anchorages of the adjacent islands. Their ultimate goal was “to place the islands under our Emperor’s flag, to the glory of our country”. The local tribe chief Kabua (?-1910) promised them assistance and according to Suzuki, he accepted to place the Japanese flag over his house in Ailinglapalap. Suzuki’s submitted his official report to Foreign Minister Inoue but was instructed by him, to return to Ailinglapalap and remove the flag. Inoue did not

land to the Emperor. Ryukei Yano’s (1851-1931) “The Story of the Floating-castle” published in 1890 and Teccho Suehiro’s (1849-96) “A Great Disturbance in the South Seas” in 1891 are typical examples of fictitious colonial writing. See Naoto Sudo, *Nanyo Colonialism/Postcolonialism: A Comparative Literary and Cultural Study on Representations of the Pacific in Japanese and English Language Fiction*, Doctoral Dissertation, University of Wollongong 2003, pp. 14-20.

¹⁵³ Mark R. Peattie, *Nan’yō: The Rise and Fall of the Japanese in Micronesia, 1885-1945*, (Honolulu, 1988), pp. 6-9.

¹⁵⁴ Peattie, *Nan’yō*, pp. 6-7.

¹⁵⁵ Schencking, “The Imperial Japanese Navy”, pp. 776-777.

dare to displease the powers. In any case in October 1885 the Marshall Islands became a German protectorate and the opportunity was lost. In the spring of 1887 Suzuki travelled once more to the Central Pacific this time exploring small islands north of Hawaii. His memoirs, published in 1893, reveal that he urged his government to hasten and obtain an island before the West absorbed everything.¹⁵⁶

Those Japanese attracted by the prospect of adventure and profit ventured daringly south of the Bonins.¹⁵⁷ The merchant Mizutani Shinroku approached Penope in the Carolines but was fined and driven away by the Spanish authorities for illegal trade in 1887. The incident did not prevent him for trading in other islands.¹⁵⁸ Many followed his example. The entrepreneur Taguchi Ukichi (1855-1905) was the most famous of them. An advocate of mercantile expansion and colonization in the South Seas he contacted Enomoto to secure the government's backing. This is how Taguchi became president of the newly established Nantō Shōkai (South Sea Islands Company) and, thanks to its funding, bought himself a trading vessel, whereas other merchants were forced to cancel their plans due to lack of capital. The scandal generated criticism but Enomoto was fixed with the idea of exploration, maritime expansion and colonization: on 15 May 1890 Taguchi left Japan for Guam.¹⁵⁹ After negotiations with the Spanish he built a trading post in Kolonia Island. The modest turnover however brought about the liquidation of the company and its assets.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ Peattie, Nan'yo: *The Rise*, pp. 12-14.

¹⁵⁷ The name Mori Koben (1869-1945) is synonym to adventurism. Disappointed with the fact that the Japanese rule in 1875 ended just south of the Bonin Islands he dedicated his life to handing over a colonial territory to his country. In 1892 he offered his services as a military advisor to Truk's chieftain, who was in war with other tribes. Mori provided rifles and trained troops defeating the chieftain's enemies, gaining his trust and his daughter's hand in 1898. He settled on Moen island, planted the Japanese flag, taught his children Japanese and waited in vain for Tōkyō's official expedition to assume control. His story was moving for any fervent patriot. See *Ibid.*, pp. 29-31.

¹⁵⁸ David C. Purcell Jr, "Japanese Entrepreneurs in the Mariana, Marshall, and Caroline Islands" in *East Across the Pacific: Historical and Sociological Studies of Japanese Immigration and Assimilation*, ed. H. Conroy, T. S. Miyakawa, (Santa Barbara-Oxford 1972), p. 56.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 57-59.

¹⁶⁰ Under new management the company sent a vessel in Truk and Ponape in 1891. Lack of sufficient profits signified another bankruptcy. In the following year, a small trading shop was established in the Truk Island by the Kaitsu Company. Yōkō Tōsaku, Enomoto's associate founded the Kōshin Sha firm in 1891. He risked all of his possessions to see his dream come true: commerce in the Nan'yō and accommodation for Japan's poor and penal population in the Pacific. Other commercial firms active in the South Seas during this period were the Nan'yō Bōeki Hiki Gōshigaisha (Hiki South Seas Trading Company Limited) that established commercial stores in the Carolines and the Marianas and the Nan'yō Bōeki Muruyama Gōshigaisha (Muruyama South Seas Trading Company, Unlimited) founded in 1901 with bases in Palau, Yap, Truk and Ponape. These societies were confronted by the suspicion and hostility of the German colonial authorities, successors of the Spanish in the Marianas after 1895 and the Carolines, Samoa and Marshalls after 1899. Prioritizing the prosperity of their own businesses, such as the Jaluit-Gesellschaft (Jaluit Trading Company), the Germans apprehended, confiscated and generally tried to limit Japanese influence on their new colonies. The Muruyama Trading Company was frequently harassed in Ponape and Hiki's employees were expelled from Truk in January 1901. Both companies survived the unfair antagonism and even expanded their activities to such a degree that

Advocates of Nanshin-ron or the Southern Expansion Doctrine in contrast to those who perceived as Japan's lebensraum, Manchuria and Siberia (Hokushin-ron) did not limit their ambitions on the Central Pacific island chains.¹⁶¹ One of them Taketsuna Sasaki, commented on New Guinea in 1881: "Life [in New Guinea] is not so difficult, as the climate is of the best kind and there is a sufficient supply of food. The only problem is sometimes that we have attacks from natives. The islands [of New Guinea] are located at a distance of only a 10 day-voyage from Japan. It is to our advantage to gain these islands both from a strategic and a commercial point of view. Today is the opportunity to acquire these islands". The economist and politician Tsuneya Seifuku (1855-1909), who had never visited the island, was propagating the western stereotype of inferiority and "ferocious nature" of the man-eating natives in New Guinea ten years later. In 1891 and 1892 the explorer Komakichi Tomiyama visited New Caledonia and New Britain and investigated the population of these island chains and their administration. Upon his return in 1893 he entertained the possibility of an ancient Japanese colonization in New Guinea: "According to a scholar, who wrote a book about the South Seas, he dug out Japanese swords, bows and arrows in some place in New Guinea and he suggested the Japanese might have migrated there in ancient days. He also found native behaviour similar to that of the Japanese". Hattori Tōru, taking into account Katsuki Nakayama's exploration of Port Moresby and its adjacent areas in 1881, emphasized the possibility of Japanese immigration through Port Moresby to Papua-New Guinea in 1884. Finally, in 1895 Ken'nosuke Tsuji an agent of an immigration company, exalted the economic opportunities in the waters of British New Guinea, particularly in the field of fishery.¹⁶²

Japanese immigrants in Australia and the Thursday Island, where they successfully engaged in pearl fishing, starting experiencing from the 1890s the Australian authorities' racism and hostile legislation.¹⁶³ As a result some of them sought an alternative settlement in New Guinea. Among them was the pearl diver Isokichi Komine (1866-1934), who, in search for a new suitable location, had explored those waters both alone and with Tsuji in November 1894. They established the Nichi-go Bōeki Kaisha (the Japan-Australia Trade Company) to facilitate Japanese immigration in British New Guinea. However, Tsuji was unable to convince

the Japanese had practically a trading monopoly in their hands during the first years of the 20th century. See Ibid., pp. 20-24.

¹⁶¹ Sven Matthiessen, "The Perception of the Philippines in Japanese Pan-Asianism From the Meiji-Era Until the Wake of the Pacific War" in *Gender Equality and Multicultural Conviviality Journal*, No. 4 (March 2011), p. 132.

¹⁶² Hiromitsu Iwamoto, "The Origin and Development of Japanese Settlement in Papua and New Guinea, 1890-1914" in *South Pacific Study*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (March 1995), pp. 98-101.

¹⁶³ The 15 May 1897 copy of *The Settler and South Queensland Pioneer* newspaper, spurred by the Yellow Peril syndrome spoke about the Japanese menace and prospect of invasion against Queensland. The Pearl Shell and Beche-de-Mer Fishery Act (1898), the Aborigines' Protection Act (1899) the Sugar Works Guarantee Act (1900) and finally the Commonwealth of Australia's 'White Australia Policy' and the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 hit hard the Asian communities. See Ibid., pp. 100-101.

the colony's governor Sir William MacGregor (1846-1919) to grant land to prospective Japanese settlers. Gonzaemon Ogirima, the manager of the Kōsei Emigration Company persisted. On 11 May 1900, he requested his Foreign Ministry's approval to extend Japanese immigration to New Guinea. For a series of reasons his plan did not come into fruition. Australia's and Thursday Island's distressed Japanese then opted for the German New Guinea solution; Komine opened negotiations in 1901.¹⁶⁴ Planting of Japanese communities in distant and unknown Pacific islands would raise Tōkyō's wealth, influence and prestige only slightly. Japanese nationals continued to be mistreated abroad but the Meiji government had other priorities: it needed a greater prize, a colonial possession to administrate effectively demonstrating its value to the world.

The Philippines could certainly not evade the attention of the aspirant colonialists. The ardent expansionist and member of the Nan'yō Kyōkai, Yōkō Tōsaku starting from 1886 proposed a Japanese mission to the Spanish colony with the intention of surveying the archipelago and negotiate the purchase of land for his poverty ridden countrymen. Motivated by the Malthusian concept of surplus population he advocated the purchase of Palawan, Sulu, Mindanao, the Carolines and Marshal Islands. Sugiura Shigetake or Jūgō (1855–1924) through his political novels introduced the idea of Tōkyō's civilizing and liberating mission in the Spanish held Philippines in 1886.¹⁶⁵ On 5 June 1885 he asserted "If you created a colony outside the 60-odd prefectures, opened a New Japan, and came to hoist the rising-sun flag there, you would not only recover your honor but also help project Japan's national prestige overseas".¹⁶⁶ The journalist Kuga Katsunan (Nakata Minoru 1857-1907) stressed not only the fertility and resources of the Philippines but also the two nations' alleged common "Malay lineage" in November 1888.¹⁶⁷ The nationalist Sukanuma Teifū or Sukanuma Sadakaze (1865-1889) in his work *New Japan's Dream of aspirations to the South Seas*, published around 1888, suggested the capture of the neighbouring European colonies and the collaboration with fellow Asians to ward off the western menace. In regard to the Philippines he claimed that one hundred battleships costing 100,000,000 yen were sufficient to drive the despotic Spanish away from the archipelago as "Hideyoshi once gave it a try". While in Manila he investigated Luzon's prospects for immigration and trade and discovered that Madrid's hold was weak. He found that the country was rich in natural resources. To legitimize an expedition that might have proven eventful, he referred to Japan's mission to assist fellow Asians and to the racial similarities of the two nations. "The

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 102-105.

¹⁶⁵ Sugiura recommended the accommodation of 90,000 Burakumin (social outcasts) in the Philippines. The immigrants were to befriend the local population and assist them in preparing an uprising against the Spanish. He even made provisions to supply the rebels with ammunition in 1896. See Shinzō Hayase, "Japan and the Philippines" in *Philippine Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (First Quarter 1999), p. 34.

¹⁶⁶ Jun Uchida, "From Island nation to Oceanic Empire: A vision of Japanese expansion from the periphery" in *The Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 1, (Winter 2016), p. 84.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 87.

gods have wanted to give this new territory to Japan. Therefore, the gods left them in another's hands for a while because they had feared that the Philippine islands would be occupied by others. Then the gods are waiting for our occupation..." he concluded before his death in Manila in 1889.¹⁶⁸ In April 1891 Suzuki Noriaki, an official of the Japanese embassy in Manila, undertook surveys in the province of Pampanga in view of establishing there future Japanese immigrants.¹⁶⁹

Fukumoto Nichinan, founder of the Tōhō kyōkai (East Asian society) as previously mentioned, championed Japanese trade, immigration and finally expansion on the Philippines as a means of insuring his homeland's security. Anxious that a "mighty country" could occupy the islands before Tōkyō had the chance to do so, he particularly feared a German interest and possible establishment south of the Ryūkyūs. Fukumoto visited the Philippines twice, in 1889 and 1891, to gather information. He concluded that the local colonial authorities were inadequate to sufficiently administer or defend the islands. On 30 April 1890, nervous about Japan's southern border, he wrote "Here is one way, if Spain could continue holding the [Philippine] Islands we should help her; if she cannot keep the Islands, we should take them from her and govern them". Such a development would have undoubtedly raised the nation's prestige, security and prosperity.¹⁷⁰

After the 1895 Sino-Japanese war many oppressed Asian nations came to regard victorious Japan as a modernization model and an inspiration for their own political emancipation. This trend was further intensified after the Japanese triumph against Russia in 1905 in a way similar to how the 1896 battle of Adwa had spread hope to the African peoples. In August 1896, a revolt against the Spanish rule took place in the Philippines. The Katipunan (Patriots League), a revolutionary society founded in 1892, sent several envoys to Japan seeking material help from a fellow Asian nation. The Japanese warship *Kongo* docked in Manila in May 1896. Its captain met with Andres Bonifacio (1863-1897) and other leaders of the national liberation movement but we can only speculate about the results.¹⁷¹ The military sent Sakamoto Shiroo (1872-1931) in Manila in March to report on the situation. As a supporter of the liberation movement he proposed the dispatch of a battalion of Japanese marines to collaborate with the rebels against the American forces that had in the meantime

¹⁶⁸ Josefa M. Saniel, "Four Japanese: Their Plans for the Expansion of Japan to the Philippines" in *The Pacific World, Lands, Peoples and History of the Pacific 1500-1900*, ed. M. Caprio, K. Matsuda, (Hampshire, 2007), pp. 324-326.

¹⁶⁹ Shinzō Hayase, "Diplomats of Meiji Japan in the Philippines" in *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (December 1989), pp. 291.

¹⁷⁰ Saniel, "Four Japanese", pp. 331-332.

¹⁷¹ Revolutionary leader Emilio Jacinto y Dizon (1875-1899) presented the Japanese captain with a letter for the Emperor in which he requested material help. Some claim that the captain responded rather formally and departed without tangible results. Others though believe that on that particularly day a secret alliance, the "Kongo agreement", was concluded. See Grant K. Goodman, "Filipino Secret Agents, 1896-1910" in *Philippine Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (Third Quarter 1998), p. 378.

succeeded the Spanish.¹⁷² Tōkyō at that time though was pursuing harmonious relations with the West in order to negotiate the annulment of the unequal treaties. On 17 June 1898 envoys of the Philippine Provisional Revolutionary Government exiled in Hong Kong, travelled to Yokohama to buy armaments but discovered that Tōkyō was unwilling to sever its relations with Washington so bluntly.¹⁷³ Emilio Aguinaldo

¹⁷² It is appropriate to examine briefly the 19th century American position vis-à-vis the Pacific. Officially, the natal date of the American Imperialism is considered to be April 1898. This is when the US declared war on Spain taking advantage of this declining power's domestic upheaval and its military inability to combat the constant Cuban and Philippino revolts for emancipation. Long before that occurrence though the American politicians, industrialists, publicists and the military harboured territorial ambitions on the Caribbean, South America and the Pacific. The remarkable technological progress and industrial growth (from 8% in 1860 to 54% in 1900) of the United States came as a confirmation of the country's splendid "Manifested Destiny". The extermination of the Native Americans, the abuses against coloured people, the victorious conflict with Mexico (1846-48) and the irrepressible expansion towards the Pacific coast created a self-centred racial, militaristic and imperialistic precedent. In his 1886 book the clergyman Josiah Strong (1847-1916) envisioned the American race's settlement in Central and South America, Africa and beyond. Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885) administration's failed attempt to occupy the Dominican Republic in 1869 and 1871 was followed by the lease of Samoa's port Pago Pago first unofficially in 1872 and then officially in 1878. In the Pacific, Hawaii, Wake, Alaska and Guam were either purchased or conquered as naval and coaling stations on the route to China, which American financial circles, believing the Chinese market myth, desired to penetrate commercially. The 1870-1880 depression drove America's ruling political and business classes to discover markets where their production surplus could be sold off. It was crucial that the Asian markets had to offer equal trading opportunities and remain open. Washington witnessing the European scramble for spheres of influence, railway and mining rights was worried about the Russian progress in Manchuria where one-half of America's textile exports went. On 31 January 1898, the American Minister in Beijing, Charles Denby (1861-1938) declared that "partition would... destroy our markets" and asked for "an energetic protest...against the dismemberment of China". Despite the fact that the Spanish-American war was fought on the pretext of Cuban liberation, McKinley's government planned the seizure of the Philippines as the "American Hong Kong"; a military and trading base from which American merchants could directly penetrate the coveted Chinese markets. In contrast with Cuba and Puerto Rico, in the Philippines there were no American commercial interests or even missionary activity at the time. It was a strategic long sighted move. Several months before the outbreak of the war the Assistant Secretary of the Navy Department, Theodor Roosevelt had devised a war plan that included the dispatch of 20,000 men and the seizure of Manila. After the capture of the city on 13 August 1898 the Filipino War for Independence (1899-1902) begun, this time directed against Washington. On 3 June 1899, President McKinley ordered the US Navy to capture some islands in the central Pacific to serve as a station between Manila and the mainland US. The military's and businessmen's support to expansion was more than granted. On 16 September 1898 McKinley talking this time about the prospect of Hawaii's annexation exclaimed: "If to this we now added the Philippines, it would be possible for American energy to... ultimately convert the Pacific Ocean into an American Lake". For more see Alberto Aquarone, *Le Origini dell'Imperialismo Americano da McKinley a Taft (1897-1913)*, (Bologna, 1973), pp. 11-119 and Thomas McCormick, "Insular Imperialism and the Open Door: The China Market and the Spanish-American War" in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (May, 1963), pp. 155-169 and Jennifer Fish Kashay, "Agents of Imperialism: Missionaries and Merchants in Early-Nineteenth-Century Hawaii" in *The New England Quarterly*, Vol. 80, No. 2 (Jun., 2007), pp. 280-298.

¹⁷³ Alfred Eliab Buck (1832-1902), the American Minister in Japan at the time reported the support he received by Foreign Minister Ōkuma Shigenobu "to hold and govern these islands". In January 1899, the new Foreign Minister Aoki Shūzō disclosed to Buck that "Japan could not and would not permit any step hostile to the interests of the United States in the Philippines". In the same month the Filipino envoys' request for arms was rejected. On 10 February Itō Hirobumi offered to Buck to act as mediator and to use his influence as an Asian in order to convince the rebels to yield. Itō believed that the Filipinos were incapable to govern themselves and so "their only safety was in quietly submitting to the authority and control of the United States". Tōkyō remained unwavering even when Lieutenant General Mariano Trías y Closas (1868-1914) met Hojo Taiyo, chancellor of the Japanese consulate and spoke with great respect about the Japanese monarchy and the Filipino-Japanese kinship on 11 October

(1869-1964) the country's later president visited Japan and met activists and sympathizers to his cause.¹⁷⁴ As a result a shipment of weapons and ammunitions was sent, as discreetly as possible, but it was lost when the ship carrying it sunk off Shanghai in 1898.¹⁷⁵ This incident demonstrates the Japanese interest for the Philippine Revolution and the later anti-American movements but also the reluctance of the government to act openly against the Western block. In any case Tōkyō restlessly witnessed the scramble for the Pacific region being unable at the time to exert its claims and influence from Hawaii to the Philippines. The powers enjoyed the privilege of first picking dominions even in an area so closely interwoven to Japan's strategic interests and aspirations. Japan's attention, energy and frustration had to be directed towards the Asian continent.

Talking about activists it is appropriate to present the most influential pressure groups of the era. Among the various western concepts and practices introduced in Meiji Japan, naval and geographical lobbies were also present. However, the extent and influence that the secret political associations championing militarism and expansion enjoyed was almost unheard of in European politics. After the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877 disheartened right wing former samurai created pressure groups in the form of political organizations to express their opposition and hopefully influence the central government's foreign policy. They called themselves Shishi (patriots) and were political activists inspired by Saigō Takamori's patriotism and Yoshida Shōin's expansionistic rationale.¹⁷⁶ Such groups were the Kōyōsha (Facing the Sun Society), the Kaikōsha (Reclamation Society), the Kyōninsha (Perseverance Society) and the Kyōshisha (Society to Train the Will).¹⁷⁷

The first evolved into the famous Gen'yōsha (Dark Ocean Society) by Tōyama Mitsuru (1855-1944) in Fukuoka in February 1881. Hiraoka Kōtarō (1851-1906) was the group's first president. Gen'yōsha's size increased when the fourth president Hakoda Rokusuka (1850-1888) merged it with a similar society. The "dark ocean" that separated Japan and Korea signified the members' resolution to expand across these waters on the Asian mainland. Moreover, they were convinced that the Restoration should lead to Tōkyō's rule there.¹⁷⁸ As defenders of Asia their mission was to eradicate the "yoke of Western imperialism". Initially there were 50 members and even though the organisation grew, its membership would never be more than

1900. In exchange for weapons he promised "coaling stations in the island they preferred, freedom of trade and freedom to build railroads" however without avail. See Goodman, "Filipino Secret Agents", pp. 379-384.

¹⁷⁴ Frank Jacob, *Japanism, Pan-Asianism and Terrorism: A Short History of the Amur Society (The Black Dragons) 1901-1945*, (Cambridge, 2014), p. 36.

¹⁷⁵ Hayase, "Japan and the Philippines", pp. 38-39.

¹⁷⁶ Despite being a rebel Saigō was venerated as the archetype of patriotism and champion of Japan's expansion by the leaders of the extreme nationalist societies. See E. Herbert Norman, "The Genyosha: A Study in the Origins of Japanese Imperialism" in *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (Sep., 1944), p. 265.

¹⁷⁷ Jacob, *Japanism*, pp. 25-28.

¹⁷⁸ Bradshaw, *Japan and European colonialism*, pp. 98-99.

600. They came from South-Western Japan, mostly Fukuoka,¹⁷⁹ despite the society's growth in Tōkyō and Ōsaka, and many of them identified themselves as liberals. In the 1880s liberals, bourgeoisie capitalists, disappointed by the lack of democratic reform at home opposed Tōkyō's cautious foreign policy in order to embarrass and apply pressure on the government. Later the Gen'yōsha turned to plots, blackmailing, espionage and political assassinations. In 1882 Tōyama, the society's mastermind assembled a group of spies to collect information about Korea and China, useful in case of war.¹⁸⁰ Tōyama himself, travelled in 1897-1898 from Irkutsk in Siberia to Saint Petersburg, gathering information and making maps for reference in a future war against Russia. Many of his followers followed his example. His good rapport with industrialists, high ranking officials and the military provided funding for Gen'yōsha. In 1884 the Tōyō Gakkan (Oriental Academy) was inaugurated in Shanghai as a cover for the society's espionage programme. Similarly, in Shanghai the Rakuzendō (Hall of Pleasurable Delights) initially a shelter for undercover activities, became in 1886 an operational base for the Japanese military.¹⁸¹ Gen'yōsha members also prepared an invasion of Korea without success in 1885 (Ōsaka Incident). They were also responsible for the bombing attack aimed at Foreign Minister Ōkuma Shigenobu in October 1889. China was not neglected. Kim Ok-gyun (1851-1894), a Korean revolutionary, Philippine rebels and other prominent Asian activists met with Tōyama and enjoyed his assistance. Modern China's first president Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), after a failed revolt in October 1895 took refuge in Yokohama. The Shishi supported him expecting the destabilization of the Qing government and territorial compensation for Japan in case a Chinese revolution broke out.¹⁸² Domestically, Yamagata, Prime Minister in 1891, sought the society's

¹⁷⁹ Kyūshū Island and Fukuoka in particular are considered "the spiritual home of the most rabid brand of Japanese nationalism and imperialism. Because of its history and geographical location Fukuoka had been the starting point for all Japanese efforts to secure a foothold on the continent, beginning with the semi-legendary invasion of Korea by the Empress Jingū. Fukuoka was the chief target of the Mongol invasions of 1274 and 1281, and it was the main base for Hideyoshi's armadas for his invasions of Korea in 1592 and the following years; finally, it was the chief base of naval operations during the Russo-Japanese war. In comparatively modern times it has produced more men who have concerned themselves with an aggressive foreign policy than perhaps any other centre". See Norman, "The Genyosha", p. 266.

¹⁸⁰ Jacob, *Japanism*, pp. 29-30.

¹⁸¹ It was mainly founded by the military and operated by Arao Kiyoshi or Sei an officer of the General Staff and an expert in Chinese politics, a fact reveals the close ties of the society with the military. Arao was an ardent Pan-Asianist. In 1886 he declared "I will go to China and take it over. Having taken it over, I will give it a decent administration and through that, try to revive Asia". Of course, in his plan Japan had a prominent position. On 20 September 1891 Arao despite financial hardships set up the Nisshin Bōeiki Kenkyūjo (Institute for Sino-Japanese Commercial Research). It was comprised of 150 carefully selected pupils who were sent to Shanghai to study Chinese, commerce and geography. The graduates were then sent to India, Burma, Manchuria, the Philippines or Mongolia to survey local defences, communication networks and commercial prospects. See Norman, "The Genyosha", pp. 278-280.

¹⁸² The "originator of fascism in Japan" as the historian Eizawa Kōji described him, Uchida Ryōhei (1873-1937) accompanied Sun Yat-sen to Shanghai in 1900 in order to organize an uprising. When the Chinese revolutionary suspected that Uchida, to accelerate a revolution, planned to assassinate eminent

assistance. In 1891 the parliament was dissolved because the liberals declined to approve the military budget for the build-up of the nation's armed forces. During the February 1892 elections Yamagata tried to weaken the opposition by employing nationalistic groups and the police to intimidate his political rivals. In Fukuoka 200 Gen'yōsha members attacked those perceived as disloyal, who would not vote for the military expansion. Militarism went hand in hand with expansion schemes.¹⁸³

One of the organization's activists, Uchida Ryōhei found the Gen'yōsha insufficient and too modest for his dream of Japanese hegemony over Asia. On 13 January 1901, the mother organization and the Ten'yūkyō merged into the Kokuryūkai (Black Dragon Society) in Tōkyō. Its 59 members on 3 February became more than 300 in few months. Its title can also be read in Japanese as "Amur River Society" highlighting the new society's ambitions on Manchuria.¹⁸⁴ Maps of Siberia, guidebooks and Russian language classes proved that the next enemy after the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese war would be Russia.¹⁸⁵ The Kokuryūkai aspired not only to halt Saint Petersburg's influence in Korea and Manchuria but to incite war as well. Tōyama, the apostle of Japanese expansionism and creator of the model for ultra-nationalistic organizations, was involved in Kokuryūkai's activities¹⁸⁶ and frequently consulted by his disciple Uchida.¹⁸⁷

A less belligerent organization was the Tōkyō Geographical Society (Tōkyō Chigaku Kyōkai). It was founded in 1879 by Watanabe Hiromoto (1848-1901). Its declared objective was to spread geopolitical knowledge about Japan, Asia and the rest of the world. By 1880 it had 143 members.¹⁸⁸ The former Foreign Minister, Enomoto Takeaki acted for some time as its chairman. During his term a closer

government officials they terminated their collaboration. Uchida and 13 other saboteurs, translators and propagandists formed the Ten'yūkyō (Society of Heavenly Salvation for the Oppressed) aiming to take advantage of Korea's precarious internal situation (Donghak Peasant Revolution) and trigger a war. With the military's approval, they travelled to Korea in June 1894 where Uchida attacked Korean soldiers, supply routes and governmental buildings. The eventual Chinese armed intervention would surely ignite a war. Tōkyō alarmed, planned an investigation but the military disbanded it by labelling the group "volunteer corps". Two months after Uchida's arrival in Korea the Sino-Japanese War erupted. See Jacob, *Japanism*, pp. 34-35, 46-47.

¹⁸³ Ibid., pp. 37-39.

¹⁸⁴ Bradshaw, *Japan and European colonialism*, pp. 98-99.

¹⁸⁵ Sven Saaler, "The Kokuryūkai (Black Dragon Society) and the Rise of Nationalism, Pan Asianism, and Militarism in Japan, 1901-1925" in *International Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (2014), p. 136.

¹⁸⁶ By 10 February 1901 the society had set up its very own publishing house. Precisely a month later its first journal was published. The government had to ban Kokuryūkai publications numerous times since their editors were often advocating the outright occupation of Hawaii, India or the Philippines. Also, small areas of strategic importance were purchased in Korea to be used for ammunition stockpiling and intelligence gathering in preparation for the upcoming war. Furthermore, the society established a language school in which Russian and Chinese were taught to members of the military. See Jacob, *Japanism*, pp. 59-60.

¹⁸⁷ Uchida, like his mentor, travelled in Siberia and founded a jūdō school in Vladivostok in 1895 as a cover for his followers' espionage activities. See Sven Saaler, "The Kokuryūkai", pp. 131-132.

¹⁸⁸ Morifumi, "The Asianism of the Kōa-Kai", p. 42.

collaboration with Navy officials was established thanks to his contacts with high ranking officers. This association propagandized through lectures and publications colonization, immigration and shipping enterprises especially in the Pacific.¹⁸⁹ Enomoto also established the Colonial Association (Shokumin Kyōkai) in February 1893. The founding members were journalists, politicians and representatives of Tōkyō's economic cycles. This association strived to transform Japan's contract labour migration to Hawaii and North America to a colonial one. Permanent "Settler colonization," could solve the nation's overpopulation problem, boost the shipping industry, promote exports, and stimulate the industry and commerce. Among the association's activities was the organization of lectures and surveys to collect information on the most suitable places for Japanese settlement. The Colonial Association's board inspected every possible location and came to the conclusion that Latin America was the ideal destination for Japanese settlers. Enomoto regarded Mexico in particular as an inviting prospect free of western domination and exploitation. He even started purchasing Mexican land to provide for future Japanese peasant settlement but the endeavour encountered financial difficulties.¹⁹⁰

In 1888 the scholar Sugiura Shigetake launched the aforementioned Seikyōsha (Society for Political Education). For its members, national self-strengthening would be achieved by exporting people, capital and products. Japan had to evolve into an "oceanic" maritime nation. Sugiura in August 1887 lamented Japan's territorial extent: "How miserably small Japan looks on the map of the world". He asked for the creation of a "Colonial Ministry" to regulate immigration, administer Hokkaidō and the Bonin islands and "investigate methods for developing other colonies". On the occasion of war with China in August 1894 he stressed that Japan as a maritime nation must "expand not only in navy" "but also its sea-lanes and shipping in peacetime" in order to advance its foreign trade.¹⁹¹ He wanted Japan to become "a great island empire", "an empire of free trade" motivated by the British example. The journalist and co-member, Fukumoto Nichinan stressed the urgency for Japan to solve its overpopulation problem and to develop its shipping industry.¹⁹² Furthermore, Sugiura believed that expansion was invaluable for "cultural renewal" and for infusing patriotism to the still timid Japanese. For the more adamant Seikyōsha supporters, Japan through trade, emigration and if necessary war, had to acquire territories in order to be taken seriously in the international power politics. Tōkyō for them had to lead Asia against the West as well. These ardent imperialists conceived Japanese mass settlement overseas as the instrument for the "conquest of frontiers" and the establishment of "New Japans" throughout the world as Shiga

¹⁸⁹ Schencking, "The Imperial Japanese Navy" pp. 775-776.

¹⁹⁰ Xu Lu, *Diasporic Imperialism*, pp. 67-68.

¹⁹¹ Uchida, "From Island nation", pp. 60-62.

¹⁹² Seikyōsha members were not the only ones to promote these notions. An April 1885 bulletin of the Ministry of Agriculture, Commerce, and Industry urged Japanese merchants to venture abroad as in the early 17th century when "Our merchants, full of enterprising spirit, frequently travelled to Taiwan, Cochin [China], Siam, and Cambodia" creating "colonies"; in Siam alone, "Japanese residents, male and female, totalled as many as eight thousand". See *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

Shigetaka envisioned in 1887.¹⁹³ Sugiura and Fukumoto Nichinan both called for the construction of more warships that would not only contribute to national security; in time of peace they were to be employed as transports to carry merchants to South American and Pacific markets.¹⁹⁴ In 1886 the former suggested energetic expansion by “choosing a prospective colony among the islands of the East Indies” and the creation of a Japanese East Indies Company to top at least the “level of Holland and Spain”.¹⁹⁵

In September 1900, the Kokumin Dōmeikai (People Alliance Society) was founded by the pan-Asian ideologue Prince Konoe Atsumaro who also advocated expansion to the Asian mainland. He envisioned an Asia for the Asians. He confided in the socialist Shūsui Kōtoku: “If we defeat Russia, we expand to the continent and bring peace to Asia”.¹⁹⁶ Two years earlier Konoe had established the Dōbunkai (Society for Common Culture) which evolved into the Tōa-Dōbunkai (Society for Common East Asian Culture) on 2 November 1898. Its aims were to assist China’s development and preserve its integrity. This association was a semi-governmental organization since it was sponsored by secret funds of the Foreign Ministry, the Army and from business cycles; Foreign Minister Aoki Shūzō promised financial support in April 1899. From then until 1913 the Tōa-Dōbunkai, the Foreign Ministry’s eye in China, received 40 thousand yen as subsidy on an annual basis. The Tōa-Dōbun Shoin (Academy for East Asian Culture) opened in 1900 and operated in Shanghai making use of these funds.¹⁹⁷ Realizing Konoe’s dream it evolved into the largest cultural facility outside of Japan and its colonies. It was Tōa-Dōbunkai’s greatest undertaking and it lasted until the very end, 1945.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹³In the same occasion he explained: “If our countrymen migrated and settled everywhere across the sea . . . they would order daily necessities and goods from the home country, thereby establishing [new] connections”. See *Ibid.*, pp. 63-68.

¹⁹⁴ They were not alone in harbouring visions of prosperity through commerce. The Mitsui Trading Company’s inaugural statement (1876) stated the firm’s objective to “*export overseas surplus products of the Imperial land, to import products needed at home, and thereby to engage in trade with ten thousand countries of the universe*”. See Bradshaw, *Japan and European colonialism*, pp. 112-113.

¹⁹⁵ Uchida, “From Island nation”, pp. 81-82.

¹⁹⁶ Harry Jerome Lamley, *The Taiwan literati and early Japanese rule, 1895-1915: a study of their reaction to the Japanese occupation and subsequent responses to colonial rule and modernization*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Washington, 1964, pp. 318-319.

¹⁹⁷ Saaler, *Pan-Asianism in Meiji*, pp. 22. As it is evident by the numerous Japanese institutions in Shanghai, this city attracted the interest of Meiji politicians and merchants alike. Initially though and despite Kishida Ginkō’s (1833-1905) pleads for the establishment of a more energetic commercial presence no Japanese businesses existed in Shanghai in 1871. In contrast Britain had 221, the US 42, Germany 40 and France 17. Arao also pointed out the western example and mentioned the advantages that commerce and industry in China provided to national prestige and strength. By 1887 however, 41 Japanese businesses were operating in this vivid commercial node. See Douglas R. Reynolds, “Training Young China Hands: Tōa-Dōbun Shoin and Its Precursors, 1886-1945,” in *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895-1937*, ed. P. Duus, R. H. Myers, and M. R. Peattie, (Princeton, 1989), pp. 212-215.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 227-228.

10. Japan's politico-strategic position in the Far East

Before expanding overseas, the Japanese sought to secure for themselves the adjacent territories ahead of the Great Powers. The fear of foreign penetration through bases close to mainland Japan pushed the Meiji leaders to ascertain their claims and finally incorporate lands both in the north and south of the country. In this chapter the diplomatic maneuvers, the relations of Meiji Japan with its neighbors and the powers, the management of its bordering territories, and the very first Japanese attempts to expand in East Asia will be examined.

On 7 February 1855, the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between Japan and Russia was concluded as already examined. Signed by Vice Admiral Yevfimiy Vasilyevich Putyatin and a Japanese delegation under the samurai Moriyama Einosuke (1820-1872) it opened Nagasaki, Shimoda and Hakodate to Russian trade. Article two was the most important as it demarcated the common border of the two neighbouring empires. According to its provisions, the island of Sakhalin (Karafuto) was placed in rather vague terms; the Russian settlements in the north and the Japanese in the south would remain intact under a "joint possession" status. In the Kurile islands, Edo kept Etorofu and the southern islands whereas Saint Petersburg gained Urup as well as the rest of the northern islands for the time being.¹

Japan and Russia had both shown interest in the islands north of Honshu during the early 19th century. The first scientific exploration of the island was entrusted by the Bakufu to Mamiya Rinzō (1775-1844) in June 1809 in an attempt to designate and define the Japanese-Russian-Chinese borders.² The treaty of Aigun in May 1858 between Qing China and the Russian empire ceded to the latter territory on the northern bank of the Amur in Manchuria. In 1860, Saint Petersburg enhanced its strategic position in the Far East by establishing the Pacific Maritime province and the Vladivostok bastion. The island of Sakhalin bordering the Russian possessions was considered of high strategic and economic importance. Russian explorers discovered rich deposits of coal there in 1852-1853 and the explorer Gennady Ivanovich

¹ George Alexander Lensen, *The Russian push toward Japan: Russo-Japanese relations, 1697–1875*, (New York, 1959), p. 425.

² Besides this strategic necessity, western practices dictated the use of geographical and mapping expeditions as predecessors to expansion and primary sovereignty claims. Hence the explorers Mogami Tokunai (1754-1836), Matsuda Denjirō, Matsūra Takeshirō (1818-1888), Murakami Shimonjō, Aoshima Shunjō and Inō Tadataka were dispatched to Hokkaidō and Sakhalin to survey the northern territories and consolidate Japan's rights. Russian, French and British explorers and cartographers had already outlined Sakhalin's coastlines in the eve of the 19th century thus posing a potential threat to the shogunate. In April 1807, the explorer Nikolaj Petrovič Rezanov (1764-1807) and his men attacked Japanese garrisons and fisheries in Sakhalin and the Kuriles. These attacks were meant to exert pressure and open Japan to foreigners before Perry. For this reason, Mamiya's orders were to thoroughly explore Sakhalin. He presented the island as almost vacant, ready for Japanese occupation with the exception of some locals who maintained tributary relations with the mainland Qing authorities. See Brett L. Walker, "Mamiya Rinzo and the Japanese Exploration of Sakhalin Island: Cartography and Empire" in *Journal of Historical Geography*, Vol. 33 (2007), pp. 283-305.

Nevelskoy (1813-1876) proclaimed Sakhalin's annexation to Russia. Putyatin negated this claim out of fear of an Anglo-French attack since the Crimean War (1853-1856) was already underway.³ However, the Russian government instructed in April 1853 the contracted Russo-American Company to administer, exploit and defend the island from foreign intruders. After the Russo-Japanese treaty and the end of the Crimean war both sides tried to strengthen their claims by erecting posts and installing garrisons. Albeit belatedly the Bakufu came to understand Karafuto's importance for the protection of Hokkaidō.⁴ Under the new governor of Oriental Siberia, Nikolay Nikolayevich Muravyov-Amursky (1809-1881), nominated in 1856 the Russians built fortifications and excavated mines gradually pushing the Japanese settlements farther south. In August 1859, he visited Edo to negotiate the cession of the entire island in return for fishing rights but the shogunate officials called for the maintenance of the division based on the 50th parallel north. Mutual distrust was heightened after the murder of three Russian sailors in Shinagawa on 25 August. The tension rose even further when Edo dispatched more troops and supplies in the Japanese base near the Aniwa river called Kushunkotan (Korsakov) in October 1860, when the Russians were sending immigrants and prisoners to create a penal colony.⁵

The prospect of war between Russia and Japan appeared imminent on 13 March 1861 due to the *Possadonick* incident. The Russian warship *Possadonick* docked at Tsushima Island for repairs and replenishment without authorization. Almost immediately the ship's crew started building shore facilities and Birileff, their captain, demanded the permanent leasing of the location. Edo, alarmed by Tsushima's authorities dispatched the statesman Oguri Kozukenosuke (Oguri Tadamasa, 1827-1868) to dismiss the outrageous pretensions on 14 June. The negotiations dragged on without the Russians demonstrating any inclination to abandon the island. On 14 August, Alcock, the British Minister, and Admiral Hope intervened in favour of the Japanese. In late August, two British warships made their appearance in Tsushima forcing the Russians to finally leave in early September. Edo had to rely on foreign support to protect its sovereignty from intruders. The fact that any power could seize any part of the national territory at will added to the people's anxiety.⁶

According to an English observer, in 1869 the Japanese settlements in Sakhalin, numbering 200-300 mainly seasonal hunters and fishermen, were located

³ In August 1854, the Allies indeed seized the city of Petropavlovsk at Russian Kamchatka. See Lensen, *The Russian push*, p. 426.

⁴ Daniela De Palma, "Le Relazioni Russo-Giapponesi negli anni 1854-1875", in *Il Giappone*, Vol. 36 (1996), pp. 72-73.

⁵ The Russians also destroyed the Japanese fishing stations and lodgings in Kushunkotan. Colonel Mikhail Ivanovich Veniukov (1832-1901) admitted in the early 1870s that a sort of guerilla warfare was taking place on the island; strongholds were erected and demolished, supplies and infrastructure were sabotaged and troops were frequently deployed to give the impression that a particular locality was under Japanese or Russian control. The frontier was not respected and each side ventured across the border and created posts at will. See Lensen, *The Russian push*, pp. 426-427.

⁶ Key-Hiuk Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order: Korea, Japan, and the Chinese Empire, 1860-1882*, (London, 1980), pp. 89-90

exclusively in the south coasts. In 1859-1860 a Russian explorer estimated the number of permanent settlers to around 150 located in the southern tip. The implication was that the rest of the Sakhalin, that is $\frac{3}{4}$ of the island belonged to Russia. Encouraged by these evaluations De Preradovich, the commander of the Russian forces in Sakhalin, revealed to the aforementioned Englishman that dual possession was unpractical and since the Japanese were not able to develop economically the island they had to renounce their part. In the summer of 1862 a three-member Japanese delegation visited Saint Petersburg to revolve the protracted and unsettling issue. Count Nikolay Pavlovich Ignatyev (1832-1908), director of the Foreign Affairs' Asian department, and the Edo's delegates did not reach to an agreement. In March 1866, the diplomats Koide Hidesane and Ishikawa Kanzaburo were sent to resume negotiations with Ignatyev's successor, Petr Stremoukhov.⁷ The Japanese proposed a common investigation of the boundary and a line of demarcation on the 48th parallel. Stremoukhov responded that the island had to be placed under Russian protection to prevent other powers from moving in. To smooth over the Japanese objections he offered fishing rights and the islands of Uruppu, Broton and Chiproi in the Kurils. On 30 March 1867, the "Temporary Regulations relative to the island of Sakhalin" was concluded establishing: free passage for Russian and Japanese subjects in the entire island, protection of the native Ainu race and settlement of differences by the local authorities. With the Boshin War (January 1868-June 1869) in progress and the Restoration uncompleted, Japan found itself in a precarious position both internally and diplomatically. Taking advantage of the situation in 1868, the Russians penetrated the Japanese part of the island, constructed a fort and burned down the station of Ōtomari. Furthermore, they transported there 800 prisoners and guards. However, Sakhalin's proximity to the Japanese home islands meant that colonists, supplies and troops were more efficiently available in contrast to the rival side.⁸

After the conclusion of the Boshin war and the consolidation of the Emperor's rule a different approach was attempted. The Karafuto Kaitakushi (Sakhalin Colonization Company) was established under Kuroda Kiyotaka in March 1870 for the administration of the southern part of the island and the mediation of the American government was requested.⁹ In the summer of 1872, Foreign Minister Soejima acknowledging that the protracted friction with Russia was detrimental to the newborn state's diplomatic standing met with Evgenii Biutsov, the newly appointed Russian Minister in Japan. Soejima offered two million yen for the acquisition of the northern part of the island but Biutsov declined. He proposed the exchange of

⁷ Lensen, *The Russian push*, pp. 434-435.

⁸ De Palma, "Le Relazioni Russo-Giapponesi", pp. 76-77.

⁹ The Japanese government approached William Henry Seward (1801-1872) in October 1869. He was the politician that had negotiated the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867. The involvement of the American Minister in Japan, Charles Egbert De Long, in March 1870 and of the American Secretary of State, in December did not yield any fruits either. Saint Petersburg rejected the American good offices' overtures. See Lensen, *The Russian push*, 438-439.

Tōkyō's share with several northern Kuril Islands instead. The negotiations broke down once more without resolving the frontier issue. Kuroda on a memorandum to the throne in May 1873 maintained that Sakhalin's feeble economic value did not justify the drain of resources amidst the government's modernization program.¹⁰ Finally, Enomoto Takeaki this time as Japan's plenipotentiary met the Russian Foreign Minister Alexander Mikhailovich Gorchakov (1798-1883) in January 1875 in the Tsar's capital. The prolonged discussions were concluded on 7 May and resulted in the Karafuto-Chishima or Sakhalin-Kuril Islands Exchange treaty.¹¹ Sakhalin and the Kurils were recognized as Russian and Japanese respectively, mutual compensations for the construction of infrastructure was accorded, repatriation for those who wished to leave and protection for those who preferred to stay was agreed and free use of the Kushunkotan port was granted to the Japanese where a Japanese consul was to be installed. Finally, the Japanese were granted fishing, navigation and trade rights at the ports of the Sea of Okhotsk and Kamchatka.¹²

The treaty and its supplement concluded on 22 August in Tōkyō was deemed offensive by the Japanese public. Sakhalin's strategic importance and resources were undoubtedly superior to the northern uninhabited islets of the Kurils. The treaty was even more unjust for the native Ainu (japanefied or russified) and Aleuts residents that had to choose nationality within 3 years and migrate accordingly, abandoning their ancestral lands.¹³ The southern part of Sakhalin was recovered by Japan as a result of the Russo-Japanese war. As for the central and northern Kurils acquired in 1875, Tōkyō incorporated them into the homeland.¹⁴ Since 1798 many Bakufu scholars such as Habuto Masayasu and Tokugawa Noriaki (1800-1860) envisaged the colonization of the Kurils. Naturally the Exchange treaty of 1875 sparked the interest of activists. Cabinet Secretary Kaneko Kentarō (1853-1942) after an exploration mission in 1885 suggested the installation of farmer-soldiers (*tondenhei*) to these strategic outposts. The relocation of the Ainu during the previous year had left the

¹⁰ Extraction of coal required capital investments which Tōkyō did not possess, the harsh climate prohibited any serious immigration or any agricultural endeavours and finally the common border contributed to the ongoing Russian hostility. In 1874 many Japanese colonists were moved to Hokkaidō in an effort to avoid expenses and dangerous disputes in Sakhalin. See De Palma, "Le Relazioni Russo-Giapponesi", pp. 78-79.

¹¹ George Alexander Lensen, "Japan and Tsarist Russia-the Changing Relationships, 1875-1917" in *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas, Neue Folge*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Oct. 1962), pp. 337-338.

¹² Lensen, *The Russian push*, p. 443.

¹³ The proximity of the russified Ainu to Kamchatka and their affinity towards the Russians seemed as a palpable threat to Tōkyō's officials. Efforts to persuade them to relocate failed in 1876, 1878 and 1882 and so in June and July 1884 their removal was made mandatory. In the southern islands the Ainu unaccustomed to farming, relied on government subsidies for their survival; they were paid 1,800 yen annually until the Aborigine Protection Law in 1889. In 1896, Tōkyō dispatched Buddhist priests and teachers to culturally assimilate the Ainu children. However, the russified Christian Orthodox Ainu were not the best candidates for loyal imperial subjects. See John J. Stephan, *The Kuril Islands: Russo-Japanese Frontier in the Pacific*, (London, 1974), pp. 109-113.

¹⁴ The Kurils were administered as part of Hokkaidō. The southern part formed the Chishima district in 1869. From 1871 these islands, and after 1875 the rest of the archipelago, were administered by the Hokkaidō colonial government. From 1882 to 1886 the islands were part of the Nemuro province and subsequently of the Nemuro Branch Office. See *Ibid.*, pp. 93-97.

islands uninhabited and vulnerable to Russian intrusion. According to Kaneko, regular shipping service and the presence of the Imperial Navy would ward off any potential encroachment. His views were endorsed by Kataoka Toshimazu in his report to the Emperor in 1892. The geographer Okamoto Kansuke¹⁵ (1839-1904) established the Kuril Society (Chishima Gikai) to raise volunteers and capital for the colonization of the Urup and Iturup islands. Lack of funding signaled the dissolvment of the society. His successor, Lieutenant Gunji Shigetaga founded the Kuril Service Society (Chishima Hōkō Gikai) in 1892. Under the concentrated crowd's ovation Gunji and 60 daring colonists departed from Tōkyō for the empire's northern edge on 20 March 1893. Very few survived the hazardous voyage and the extreme conditions to settle in the remote islands.¹⁶

Hokkaidō, known as Ezo or Yezo Island, was not entirely integrated to the Shogunate's territory until 1855, when the island was typically annexed in response to a perceived threat from Russia. Besides the southern tip that was inhabited by Japanese nationals the rest of the vast island was populated by the Ainu aborigines. Ezo was seen by many Japanese as terra incognita, foreign but at the same time within the Japanese cultural and commercial orbit. In the 15th century the Tokugawa administration entrusted the jurisdiction and internal order of the island to the Matsumae clan. The Matsumae sought profits through trading with the natives and not by taxing the rice production, as it was the case traditionally, due to the area's frigid conditions. From the first half of the 15th century fortified trading posts in the interior and the Shakushain War¹⁷ against the Ainu resulted to political penetration and the gradual economic exploitation of Hokkaidō by the mainland.¹⁸ However, the northern part of the island remained unknown and unexplored, a dumping ground for deported criminals. The Meiji leadership demonstrated interest for the development of Hokkaidō and alarmed by the Russian escalating presence in the north strove to protect its sovereign rights and establish its national boundaries. After the dissolution of Enomoto's Republic of Ezo in June 1869, the Matsumae were briefly reinstated to perform its policing duties but it was clear that a firm modern administration was

¹⁵ Back in 1868 Okamoto began leading colonists to Aniwa bay, in Sakhalin's southern tip. The settlement programme cost Tōkyō 400,000 yen between 1870 and 1873. See Peter Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895-1910*, (London-Berkeley, 1995), pp. 197-198.

¹⁶ Gunji did not lose hope. He returned yet again to the Kurils in 1896 accompanied by his followers and family. During the Russo-Japanese war he organized a mission and invaded the Russian Kamchatka. His self-appointed task force of 100 adventurers occupied the town of Ozernoe on 6 June 1904 until the arrival of a Russian detachment. See Stephan, *The Kuril Islands*, pp. 115-117.

¹⁷ For more on Shakushain's War (1669-1672) see Brett L. Walker. *The Conquest of Ainu Lands: Ecology and Culture in Japanese Expansion, 1590-1800*, (Berkeley-London, 2001), pp. 48-72.

¹⁸ Donald Calman, *The Nature and Origins of Japanese Imperialism: A Reinterpretation of the Great Crisis of 1873*, (London-New York, 1992), pp. 28-30.

necessary in order to colonize¹⁹ the island; installing Japanese settlers in the imperial extremities was the indicated answer to the newborn state's geopolitical anxieties.

As early as 9 March 1868 and in the midst of the fierce civil war, the Emperor gathered its advisors to outline the national policy in regard to Hokkaidō.²⁰ In April 1868 the Hakodate District Court was established. It was expanded into the Hakodate Administrative Office in May. In July 1869 the Daijōkan created the Hokkaidō Development Agency (Kaitakushi) to administer and develop the island. The appointment of Nabeshima Naomasa (Nabeshima Kansō 1815-1871) as the first colonial secretary in 12 July 1869 was accompanied by the following imperial order: "The flourishing condition of the Imperial Power is dependent upon the colonization and exploitation of Hokkaidō. At present there is urgent need of action. We realize the great difficulties of governing this area which lies several hundred li in the Arctic North. On your official tour of duty do your best to exploit the area and to open the lock on the Northern Gate so that the people may prosper and there may be a firm base for the expansion of the Imperial Power".²¹ The affirmation of metropolitan rule in Hokkaidō was reinforced by the imperial visits of 1876 and 1881.²² The new colony was funded and defended by the central government. In 1872 a ten-year financial project secured one million yen for the Kaitakushi annually, deriving from local taxes, the Mitsui Company and subsidies from the national treasury. Until 1882, infrastructure works, roads, prisons,²³ food mills, fisheries, railways and mines had cost 20 million yen, 12 of which were provided by Tōkyō. Livestock, farming and geological surveys were conducted by foreign experts, mainly American,²⁴ employed

¹⁹ The high administrators of Tōkyō prefecture inquired the government about the prospect of obtaining Nemuro in eastern Hokkaidō as a relocation ground for the city's poor and troublemakers in the mid-1870. See *Ibid.*, pp. 226-227.

²⁰ A year later Iwakura submitted a report stressing the importance of Hokkaidō, encouraging the spreading of civilization and transforming the underdeveloped island into a "little Japan". See Michele M. Mason, *Dominant Narratives of Colonial Hokkaido and Imperial Japan: Envisioning the Periphery and the Modern Nation-State*, (New York, 2012), pp. 23-24.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

²² For the same reason the construction of a supplementary imperial palace at Hokkaidō was approved according to the 21 January 1890 *Nichi Nichi* newspaper. See *Ibid.*, p. 29.

²³ Three prisons were built on the island to detain criminals, Tokugawa supporters and radicals: in Kabato (1881), in Sorachi (1882) and in Kushiro (1885). For the historian Takashio Hiroshi the convict labour force was to develop Hokkaidō's rich natural resources, coal in particular. *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

²⁴ The choice of American advisers was not coincidental. Meiji officials knew that the United States had settled the American West through ranching and the forced removal of the natives. The most famous American adviser to visit Hokkaidō was the military officer Horace Capron (1804-1885). After Kuroda's visit to Washington in the fall of 1870, Capron was convinced to assist the island's development and modernization, introducing American agronomic patterns, machinery and crops. He arrived in Japan in August 1871 and was employed as Kaitakushi's special adviser. Directing a team of American scientists, he surveyed the frontier's climate, soil, and mineral deposits. In regard to colonization the team proposed voluntary settlement on loose terms, an advice that was adopted from 1872 to 1886. A policy of free land exempt of taxes was instituted in 1874 but without success. From 1869 to 1881 just 1% of the island's arable land was cultivated. For this reason Capron proposed the influx of western capital and farmers. Although the latter were far more accustomed with modern

by the agency after 1871. Ports were opened to foreign trade and banks were inaugurated in 1896 and 1899. Kuroda, Vice Governor General of colonization and in charge of the Sakhalin area, submitted a document in favour of colonization and national defense in the face of Russian encroachment. He claimed that warships and troops had to be based in Sapporo. In January 1875 as the Inspector-General of Military Police Affairs of the Hokkaidō Militia, Kuroda founded the first company of the Colonial Militia.²⁵

Initially the Kaitakushi suffered from lacking facilities, funds and personnel and from a power struggle within the ranks of the administrators. Until 1871 the agency controlled just 20% of the island since huge plots of land were granted to the imperial households, the Army and various religious orders. Central funding and the increase of the officials from 35 in 1871 to 306 a year later did not avert the bitter quarrels between the directors Kuroda and Iwamura or between Shima and Higashikuse. An initial effort in 1869 to settle immigrants to Sakhalin and Hokkaidō ended tragically with the death of 25% of the 300 settlers because of the hardships and the insufficient preparations before the undertaking. Similarly, in 1882 a similar percentage of the 436 destitute poor that had reached the eastern part of the island perished.²⁶ Furthermore, Hokkaidō's apparent economic potential led to corruption, antagonism and even nationwide political scandals.²⁷ Benjamin Smith Lyman (1835-1920), an American geologist in the agency's employment accused Kuroda for mismanaging public money and corruption in a letter written on 6 April 1874. In 1875 Enomoto and another government official Ōtori Keisuke (1833-1911), obtained from the government great parcels of fertile land. The American experts in charge of the development of the island opposed the transfer arguing that no settlers would arrive if the best lands were not available to them.

The biggest scandal took place in 1881. Tōkyō's investments in Hokkaidō were valued at 30 million yen in 1880. In July 1881 Kuroda planned in secrecy to sell

practices, Tōkyō refused on the grounds of national security. Outraged by the Kaitakushi's oversized bureaucratic inertia, ignorance and overspending Capron notified the Japanese government of his intention to leave on 28 March 1875. See John A. Harrison, "The Capron Mission and the Colonization of Hokkaido, 1868-1875" in *Agricultural History*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Jul., 1951), pp. 136-140 and Donald Roden, "In Search of the Real Horace Capron: An Historiographical Perspective on Japanese-American Relations", in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (Nov., 1986), pp. 552-555. For more details on Capron's activity and his scientific reports to Tōkyō see Merritt Starr, "General Horace Capron, 1804-1885" in *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society (1908-1984)*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Jul., 1925), pp. 259-349.

²⁵ Jintarō Fujii, *Japanese Culture in the Meiji Era. Volume VII. Outline of Japanese History*, (Tokyo, 1958), pp. 74-75.

²⁶ Calman, *The Nature and Origins*, 233-238.

²⁷ One more of Enomoto's societies, the trading company called Hōninsha, in operation from 1872 until 1875, received a 100,000 yen funding and a vessel from Kaitakushi to promote the Japanese-Hokkaidō-China trade. By 1881, Iwasaki Yatarō (1835-1885), founder of the Mitsubishi company, through his high political connections had secured control of Hokkaidō's shipping and credit sectors. Finally, the Mitsui firm was engaged in fishing and commercial activities in the island. *Ibid.*, pp. 229-232.

the mines and enterprises to the merchants Godai Tomoatsu (1836-1886) and Nakano Goichi, who also happened to be high level government officials, for the ridiculous amount of 300,000 yen payable in 30 years. When the misdeed was discovered the public criticized bitterly the government, giving momentum to the liberal People's Rights Movement in the 1880s that led to the imperial note announcing the opening of a National Diet.²⁸ In October 1882 the assets sale was cancelled and the Kaitakushi was brought to an inglorious end. Thereafter the Hokkaidō prefectural office took over. It appears that not everything was as splendid as the agency's journal self-congratulatory advertised. The *Hokkaidō Development Journal*, first published in January 1880, highlighted the island's abundance of resources and the administration's modernization mission. It also contained practical information on immigration and economic opportunities.²⁹

The Tondenhei colonization programme, which was briefly mentioned in the first chapter, was the Kaitakushi's main objective.³⁰ The former samurai's discontent aggravated by the widespread economic distress was equally dangerous for the metropolis' internal stability and was thus channeled to the vast, open territory in the north. Free transportation, seeds and dwellings, tax exemptions, rice and salt subsidies for three years and farming tools, were promised by Tōkyō to convince the settlers to move to an inhospitable environment. Each farm household received 16 acres of arable land and was eligible to purchase up to 80 acres at low prices. The regulations were explained in the Tondenhei handbooks. The programme, inextricably linked to the nation's vulnerability syndrome, was the brainchild of Kaitakushi officials. In 1871 they proposed to the central government the relocation of 20 families from Tōkyō to Hokkaidō to "convert Tōkyō's excess, useless population into indispensable soldiers". Foreign Minister Maruyama advocated banishing to Hokkaidō the anti-imperial troops during the Boshin war, to "secure Japanese borders and establish Japanese presence in Ezo-Sakhalin". The recruited colonists engaged in mandatory military drills annually. For the first three years, they were kept on active duty following which they spent a further ten years on the reserves. They also participated in the 1877 Satsuma Rebellion and later in the Sino-Japanese war. The first

²⁸ Fujii, *Japanese Culture in the Meiji Era*, pp. 119-120.

²⁹ Mason, *Dominant Narratives*, pp. 26-29. Two of its most famous journalists were Okamoto Nagayuki and Tsuda Sen (1837-1908). The former justified the colonization of the north by citing verses of the ancient texts *Kojiki* and *Nihongi* that validated the inherent agrarianism of the Japanese. The latter exclaimed: "Aah! The security of the northern gate is of the outmost importance to our country and high spirited production is presently urgent. In the north in Hokkaido, good farmers are increasing the power of our nation many times over and spreading the prestige of our country far and wide". *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

³⁰ Before the enactment of the Tondenhei sponsored programme in 1874 those who wanted to settle in Hokkaidō were voluntary settlers, bearing themselves the transportation and subsistence costs. They were not organized militarily and they leased land according to the following rules: those with an income above ten koku were given 1.5 acres of land; those with one to ten koku were given about one acre; those with less than one koku were given about 0.5 acres. See David L. Howell, "Early Shizoku Colonization of Hokkaidō." in *Journal of Asian History*, No. 17 (1983), pp. 55-61.

Tondenhei village was Kotoni, founded in May 1875 and populated by 198 men and their 965 family members. The *Nichi Nichi* newspaper referred to the village's establishment in terms of securing and protecting the northern territory. Another 16 similar settler groups arrived in the 1870s and five more in the 1880s. During the 30 years of the Tondenhei program 7,337 men were chosen to colonize Hokkaidō, Japan's first settlement colony. During the first 15 years only former samurai were recruited; starting from 1890 commoners' petitions were also accepted. The 60,000 Japanese in 1869 rose to one million at the end of the century.³¹ Approximately 600,000 men settled there between 1880 and 1890. Governmental encouragement, extreme poverty and the prospect of employment in agriculture, fishing or forestry enterprises provided the main stimuli. In 1883, the year after the dissolution of the agency the government announced that 150,000 yen would be loaned annually to former samurai to support the colonization effort in Hokkaidō. The Regulation for the Settlement of Former Samurai two years later provided for interest free loans and 8 acres of land to each incoming family.³²

During the Tokugawa era (1603-1868) Japan's political boundaries did not coincide with its geographical ones. The Ainu, the Ryūkyūans and even outcast minorities constituted autonomous communities or foreign entities subordinated to Edo. In regard to Hokkaidō's and Sakhalin's aborigines, relations were based on economic transactions rather than political subordination. However, the diverseness between the backwardness of the northern barbarians ("internal others") and the cultural superiority of the metropolis facilitated the development of a common Japanese identity.³³ The bipolar antithesis between the civilized centre and the barbaric periphery constituted one of the ideological pillars of the late 19th century Japanese expansionism. Japanese laws were too sophisticated for the savage Ainu. Japanese language and customs would acculturate them but not to a degree to be equally accepted as Japanese. For the pioneers of Japanese ethnography however, the Ainu and Yamato "mainland" Japanese were not so different. The ethnographers Koganei Yoshikiyo (1859–1944) and Tsuboi Shōgorō (1863–1913) for instance asserted that the Ainu were racially immature but their ancestors were related to the prehistoric Japanese. The depiction of the Chinese, Ryūkyūans, Taiwanese and Koreans as primitive but kindred races was also a vehicle for attaining an empire.³⁴

³¹ Richard Siddle, "Ainu Moshiri Revisited: Indigenous Nationalism in Japan" in *East Asian Studies*, No. 2 (Dec. 1994), p. 52.

³² See Komori Yōichi, "Rule in the Name of "Protection": The Vocabulary of Colonialism" in *Reading Colonial Japan: Text, Context, and Critique*, ed. H. Lee and M. Mason, (Stanford, 2012), pp. 67-68.

³³ David L. Howell, "Ainu Ethnicity and the Boundaries of the Early Modern Japanese State" in *Past & Present*, No. 142 (Feb., 1994), pp. 74-79.

³⁴ Morris Low, "Physical Anthropology in Japan: The Ainu and the Search for the Origins of the Japanese" in *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 53, No. S5, (April 2012), pp. 58-62.

In Hokkaidō the Meiji government focused primarily on colonization and resource development. The presence of a segregated “savage” population³⁵ suddenly became a sort of nuisance for Tōkyō’s modernizing mission.³⁶ The island was declared as *terra nullius*³⁷ by Meiji politicians, journalists and novelists to legitimize the appropriation of the land and the protection of the local population. In other words, the supposed laziness and barbarity of the natives attested to their failure to exploit the land’s great natural resources; a fact that was used to justify the metropolis’ “beneficial” intervention. Progress came at a cost though. Hokkaidō had to be seized, enlarging Japan’s borders, and administrated according to western capitalistic norms, whereas the aborigines had to become loyal imperial subjects, abandoning their obsolete way of life. In 1893 the politician Nitobe described the Ainu as “barbarian folk” and the natural resources of the island as “untouched by human hand”. Starting from 1871 the Kaitakushi announced a series of reforms³⁸ that made the relocation of native settlements mandatory, so that fertile lands were made available for the colonists, banned various religious practices and prohibited the native’s traditional means of subsistence.³⁹ The 1899 Hokkaidō Former Natives Protection Act⁴⁰ was the cornerstone of an assimilation policy, of an indoctrination through schooling and mandatory agriculturisation.⁴¹ The same kind of treatment

³⁵ Anne-Gaëlle Renaud, “Comparative study of Japanese colonialism in Taiwan and Hokkaido” in *SOAS Conference of the European Association of Taiwan Studies* (April 18-20 2008 Prague), p. 5.

³⁶ The phrases “spreading civilization” and “civilizing mission” were used in September 1869 by the Daijōkan Minister Sanjō Sanetomi in his letter to the Kaitakushi. Western imperialistic oratory was amply endorsed and put into practice initially in Hokkaidō and later in the Ryūkyūs, Taiwan and Korea. Hokkaidō was a lab experiment and Japan’s first successful settlement colony. See Yōichi, “Rule in the Name”, pp. 64-65.

³⁷ Colonial wording such as “no-man’s land” or “new frontier” was borrowed from the American policies for the Indian territory (1862). It can be found in Capron’s report that was developed into the 1872 Hokkaidō Land Regulation. See Katsuya Hirano, “Thanatopolitics in the Making of Japan’s Hokkaido: Settler Colonialism and Primitive Accumulation” in *Critical Historical Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Fall 2015), pp. 207-209.

³⁸ The 1871 Family Registry Law made mandatory the use of the Japanese language among other assimilation policies. With the 1872 Land Holding Regulation, the territory where the Ainu used to fish and hunt was expropriated by the government and made available for the incoming settlers: the already “opened land” became privately owned and, with the exception of privately leased land and land for government use, the rest of the island was available for sale to private groups. See Yōichi, “Rule in the Name”, pp. 66-67.

³⁹ Michele M. Mason, “Writing Ainu Out/Writing Japanese In: The ‘Nature’ of Japanese Colonialism in Hokkaido” in *Reading Colonial Japan: Text, Context, and Critique*, ed. H. Lee and M. Mason, (Stanford, 2012), pp. 35-44.

⁴⁰ This law, which was modelled after the American Dawes Act of 1887 for Indian minorities, guaranteed the claim of every Ainu household to a minimum of five hectares of cultivable land. It further established free Japanese language schools for Ainu children. See John B. Cornell, “Ainu Assimilation and Cultural Extinction: Acculturation Policy in Hokkaido” in *Ethnology*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Jul., 1964), pp. 297-299.

⁴¹ On the other hand, the aforementioned legislation awarded to the natives the same rights on property ownership and citizenship that any commoner enjoyed. In any case though, Ainu numbers in Hokkaidō shrank due to illnesses and the inability to adapt to the “modern” way of life: from 66,000 in 1871 to 18,000 in 1901. Tōkyō sought to incorporate the island into the national economy as an organic part of

towards the natives would be employed in Japan's colonies overseas. Hokkaidō, attained for reasons of strategic security, was the training ground for the early Meiji colonialists.

Let us now turn our attention to the South. As already mentioned, the shogun Ieyasu sought to restore peace with Korea after Hideyoshi's war of aggression, which was to perpetuate the mistrust and animosity of the continental nations for centuries to come. Ieyasu complied with the demeaning Korean demands as he aimed at normalizing diplomatic relations and commerce with Korea and through it, with Ming China.⁴² These efforts culminated to the signing of the Kiyu treaty in 1609 that regulated bilateral relations until the Meiji Restoration. Japanese presence was strictly restricted to the Waekwan district ("Japanese House" equivalent to Nagasaki's Deshima Island) in the port city of Pusan, also known as Fusan or Busan, whereas trade and diplomatic relations were entrusted to Tsushima's Sō clan. Through the clan's good offices, 12 Korean congratulatory embassies were dispatched to Japan until 1763 on the occasion of each Shogun's ascension to power.⁴³ Seoul's commitment to a policy of isolationism continued after the enthronement of King Gojong or Kojong of the Joseon Dynasty (1852-1919) in 1864 and his father's (Heungseon Daewongun or Taewŏn'gun 1820-1898) regency between 1864 and 1873. It was only in 1876 when Korea was forcibly "opened" by an unequal treaty, just as China and Japan were in 1842 and 1854 respectively. Resistance to the West's trade and diplomatic missions in the 1860s resulted in small scale conflicts.⁴⁴

mainland Japan. Its aim was Japanization and through it territorial aggrandizement, national security and increased revenue. Some scholars professed that the systematic extinction of the entire Ainu population was not among its goals. Ibid., pp. 290-292.

⁴² Japan starting from the 1592-1598 war did not hold official relations with China until 1871. Since Japan was unwilling to demote itself to the tributary status, the only way to achieve a bilateral relationship with China in the Sino-centric world order was through Korea, the unique avenue for continental contact. See Woong Joe Kang, *The Korean Struggle for International Identity in the Foreground of the Shufeldt Negotiation, 1866-1882*, (Lanham-Boulder 2005), p. 42.

⁴³ The hereditary lords of Tsushima played the role of the intermediary between the two nations; by paying tribute and adhering to Korean rules, protocol, and terminology, the Sō clan assumed the right to trade but also an inferior status in regard to Korea. Seoul therefore, perceived and dealt with the Tsushima clan as its vassal a fact that infuriated Meiji leadership. Ibid., pp. 41-43.

⁴⁴ The Russians sharing a common border with northern Korea approached the authorities of Ŭndŏk county seeking trade in 1864 and 1865 but were rebuffed. Another point of conflict was the Daewongun's persecution of Korean Christians and the execution of 9 catholic missionaries that provoked a French expedition in the autumn of 1866. Seven ships and 600 men, occupied the strategic Ganghwa Island, clashed with local troops and retreated in November without tangible results. In July 1866, the American merchant ship *General Sherman* was fired upon and destroyed off the Taedong River. Washington sensing the opportunity for a trade treaty, after three failed attempts, asked Tōkyō's mediation and dispatched two fact finding missions to the crime scene in 1867 and 1868. In June 1871, an American expeditionary force landed in Ganghwa Island, captured some forts only to depart in early July without further results. Repulsing foreign forces made Seoul even more arrogant and unyielding towards Japanese demands. In spring 1880, American officials again asked Inoue Kaoru's and Ueno's, the Vice Foreign Minister, good offices to approach Seoul. With Beijing's approval, the Korean-American treaty was signed on 22 May 1882. The first article described Korea as an autonomous state but subordinated (vassal) to China. The rest of the powers followed suit in 1883-1884. See Shin'ichi

After 1868, the Meiji leaders wished to reinvent the nation's international standing, assert its independence, project the image of a sovereign modern state and redefine its political status and diplomatic relations. The quest for security, prestige and parity passed through the revision of the humiliating unequal treaties with the West. As for its Asiatic neighbours, establishing formal diplomatic relations and agreements according to international law and western practices was the way to gain recognition for the new regime and display its progress towards civilization and modernization. With the goal of informing the Korean court of the emperor's reestablishment as the head of the state and the abolition of the Bakufu a Tsushima ambassador was sent on 13 November 1868 to pass a diplomatic note. The Korean authorities in Pusan viewed this development as a breach of protocol and found the terms "imperial house" and "emperor" as insolent and unacceptable. The character kō (皇) that the Japanese side had used for the Meiji emperor in the document was traditionally used to denominate the Chinese emperors and implied political superiority over the corresponding character ō (王) used for Korean rulers.⁴⁵ All in all the new ceremonial method suggested parity between Japan and China and Korean inferiority or even vassalage.⁴⁶ A second attempt was rebuffed when the Restoration government's "formal envoy" was not recognized as such by Korean officials on 31 January 1869. In January 1870 Seoul authorities refused to accept Japanese envoys

Kitaoka, "Inception of a Modern Relationship" in *Japan-China Joint History Research Report, Modern and Contemporary History*, Vol. 1 (Mar. 2011), p. 26 and Payson J. Treat, *Japan and the United States, 1853-1921: revised and continued to 1928*, (New York 1970), pp. 135-137.

⁴⁵ The diplomatic quarrel for nominal superiority was not so superficial as it may appear and goes back many centuries. For example, the method in which the ceremonial titles or the date were depicted in a dispatched letter was a constant cause of disputes. After the inconclusive result of the 1592-1598 war both sides claimed victory and treated the other with contempt. The Sino-centric tributary international order, the traditional Korean perception of Japan as an "inferior barbarian" nation and the teachings of Kojiki and Nihongi that implied suzerainty over Korea clashed. A vague perception of victory and therefore of superiority were means to achieve international prestige, internal stability and to consolidate legitimacy for the regimes in Beijing, Seoul and Edo. The Japanese leaders that had never lost a land battle in the war utilized the sporadic Korean embassies to perpetuate a fantasy of subordination to the Tokugawa shogunate for the sake of displaying authority towards their own subjects. The allies behaved in the exact same manner as they had managed to expel the Japanese army and had not sued for peace first. It is true though that during the Muromachi period (1336-1573) Japanese leaders with the goal of gaining the right to trade with the continent received investiture from Beijing but the Tokugawa shoguns, proud unifiers of the country, discontinued the demeaning practice. The Tokugawas contested Chinese supremacy after the fall of the empire to the barbarian northern ethnic group of the Manchu or Qing in 1644. For some scholars, emulation or rivalry denote a sense of inferiority complex for the "smaller and poorer" nation. In other words, the much-admired Chinese culture had to be challenged for the sake of the nation's survival and the formulation of a distinct Japanese identity. The introduction of a Japan centred universe and the 19th century embracement of the western "higher" civilization constitute evidence of this concept. Iwakura surely considered the principle of equality among civilized nations a facade and Kido insightfully declared in 1868 that "international law was a tool for subjugating the weak". See Norihito Mizuno, *Japan and its East Asian neighbors: Japan's perception of China and Korea and the making of foreign policy from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century*, Ph.D Dissertation, Ohio University 2004, pp. 66-358.

⁴⁶ Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 30-31.

and notifications and demanded a rewritten note according to the established etiquette and the stipulations of the 1609 treaty.⁴⁷ In October 1870 the diplomats Shigeru Moriyama and Yoshioka Kōki⁴⁸ were ordered to deliver another letter by Foreign Minister Sawa Nobuyoshi. As neither was a Tsushima envoy the request for a meeting was granted months later on 17 May 1871 and then only informally. Eventually the Koreans refused yet again to accept the Japanese communication.⁴⁹

At the same time, preliminary talks for a Sino-Japanese treaty on an equal titular basis between the two governments were underway.⁵⁰ In 1862 it was the Shogunate's turn to dispatch a diplomatic mission to Shanghai seeking bilateral trade without success. In August 1870 Tōkyō authorized Foreign Vice Minister Yanagihara Sakimitsu (1850-1894) and Finance Minister Date Munenari (1818-1892) to negotiate a treaty of amity with the prominent Qing diplomat and Viceroy of Zhili province, Li Hongzhang (1823-1901). Date quite strikingly suggested an unequal treaty in favour of Japan asking for a most-favoured-nation clause and the right to trade and travel in China's interior. The draft, modelled on the 1861 Prussian treaty with China, was the brainchild of international law scholar Tsuda Masamichi (1829-1903), who apparently believed that superiority over China meant equality with the West and the annulment of Japan's own humiliating arrangements.⁵¹ Japan, convinced of its sufficient advancement, believed that it deserved the same privileges that the Western powers enjoyed in the comparatively backward China. Li bluntly rejected the Japanese draft and countered it with one of his own. Many others felt also insulted. The Director of Civil Affairs of the Anhui province noted that Japan was a Qing vassal and a barbarian state and in any case, in no position to demand to be treated as a Great Power. Li, reflecting on China's internal turmoil due to rebellions and the Russian occupation of the Ili region responded that an equal treaty with Tōkyō had some benefits. On the 11th or the 13th of September 1871 Li and Date signed in Tianjin the Sino-Japanese Friendship and Trade Treaty. Mutual recognition of limited consular jurisdiction, fixed trade tariffs and the exchange of consuls were accorded. However, the most remarkable point of the treaty was article 2 that left open the possibility of a military alliance against the West: each party was obligated to come to the other's aid or to at least mediate in the event of the latter being treated with injustice or contempt.⁵² This provision raised suspicion among the Foreign Ministers in Tōkyō

⁴⁷ Woong, *The Korean Struggle*, p. 47.

⁴⁸ Foreign Minister Sawa instructed Yoshioka in May 1871 to approach the Korean authorities in Pusan. With the American attack pending, Sawa offered Tōkyō's mediation in exchange to a Korean-Japanese diplomatic settlement. See Kim, *The Last Phase*, p. 158.

⁴⁹ Kitaoka, "Inception of a Modern Relationship", p. 27.

⁵⁰ A nominally equal treaty placing the Japanese emperor in the same titular status to the Chinese sovereign meant in practice that Tōkyō would be able to treat Korea as an inferior. Seoul's insistence on equal diplomatic relations was unacceptable for those in Japan nurtured with the victories of Empress Jingū and Hideyoshi. See Mizuno, *Japan and its East Asian neighbors*, pp. 214-216.

⁵¹ Urs Matthias Zachmann, *China and Japan in the Late Meiji Period: China Policy and the Japanese Discourse on National Identity, 1895-1904*, (London-New York 2009), p. 14.

⁵² Kitaoka, "Inception of a Modern Relationship", pp. 19-20.

who protested to Date against the potentially menacing clause. The American State Secretary also raised the issue during his meeting with Iwakura in Washington in 1872. A note from the foreign ministry claiming that “mutual assistance does not mean military assistance” appeased western fears. However, it was clear that even a remote association with China was sufficient to harm Japan’s relations with the West. The only way forward was the collective imperialistic exploitation of the Chinese and not cooperating with them.⁵³

In Tōkyō the Korean responses were perceived as national insult by those who demanded a more active foreign policy.⁵⁴ In early January 1869, the politicians Kido and Ōshima demanded in indignation, the renewal of Korea’s tributary status to Japan as in the ancient times, as a direct result of the imperial rule’s restoration.⁵⁵ On 16 January 1872 the new Foreign Minister Soejima Taneomi appointed the State official Sagara Masaki to undertake a mission in Korea. Being aware of the possibility that negotiations could break down, Soejima also warned the Japanese subjects in Pusan, through Yoshioka, to be ready to withdraw from their district.⁵⁶ Tōkyō, determined to bring its antiquated diplomatic norms in line with western “civilized” practices, authorized Hanabusa Yoshimoto (1842-1917), of the Foreign Ministry, to transfer Waekwan’s jurisdiction from the Sō family to the ministry in September 1872. Hanabusa reached Pusan aboard the warship *Kasuga* on 16 October accompanied by two infantry platoons. The government also dispatched to Pusan the official Hirotsu Hiroshima in April 1873 to assume the role of the Japanese commissioner. In protest, the local authorities posted a provoking proclamation, referring to Japan as a “lawless country”, in May 1873. In addition, Hirotsu reported back to Tōkyō that Korean officials had placed the Japanese residents under siege, obstructing their activities and cutting off the outpost’s supplies.⁵⁷ Henceforth diplomatic relations ceased. The “Korean problem” led to a heated government debate (Seikanron) on the possibility of chastising or subduing Japan’s arrogant neighbour.

In November 1871, 54 fishermen from the Miyako and Yaeyama islands of modern day Okinawa (out of a total of 69) shipwrecked on Taiwan (Formosa) and were murdered by an indigenous tribe. After the abolition of the domains in August

⁵³ Zachmann, *China and Japan*, p. 14.

⁵⁴ Bushido’s warring spirit, Shintoist teachings, patriotism and the “psychological disorientation” of the entire samurai class after the abolition of their privileged status made a Korean expedition not just probable but also morally justifiable to the Meiji ruling elites and commoners. See Kun Lee, “Political Culture in the “Advocacy of an Expedition to Korea” in the 1870s: An Aspect of Japanese Imperialism” in *Korean Journal of Population and Development*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (July 1994), pp. 108-110.

⁵⁵ Kim, *The Last Phase*, pp. 115

⁵⁶ Sagara’s arrival at Pusan on 22 February aboard a steamship irritated the Koreans and incited suspicions of a Western-Japanese collaboration against Seoul. Talks were once more inconclusive and Yoshioka on 9 May requested his government’s approval to evacuate the Japanese House. Despite a dramatic march out of the walls of the compound to reach the Korean officials the mission failed and Yoshioka, Sagara and others left Pusan on 20 July. See *Ibid.*, pp. 163-165.

⁵⁷ Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 37-38.

1871 the Ryūkyū Islands, as part of the government's effort to eradicate their precarious "double affiliation",⁵⁸ were administratively assigned to the Kagoshima prefecture, that had succeeded the Satsuma domain. Tōkyō, in order to avoid foreign domination of the islands⁵⁹ and to eradicate their vassal status to both Qing China and Meiji Japan, sought to confirm its exclusive sovereignty according to modern international law.⁶⁰ Beijing naturally contested these unilateral actions. The new Japanese authorities, installed in February 1872 to administer and implement the mainland's reforms on the islands, upon hearing the news of the massacre⁶¹ requested the dispatch of a punitive expedition to Taiwan in June 1872.⁶² Taiwan or at least parts of it were nominally Chinese territory after 1662 when the Dutch were finally expelled from the island. At the time of the massacre it was still unclear if authority rested with Beijing or the local tribes and to what extent. In March 1873, Foreign Minister Soejima was sent in China as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary

⁵⁸ The ambiguous "double tributary status" had to be overturn by Tōkyō to satisfy the European standards of effective governance and disperse potential Chinese or Western claims. See Shogo Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire: China and Japan's Encounter with European International Society*, (New York, 2009), p. 154.

⁵⁹ On 14 December 1852, Commodore Perry proposed to the Secretary of the Navy the occupation of Ryūkyūan ports despite his recognition of Satsuma's historical claims and the status of double subordination. He justified his suggestion by stating that such a development would help with the "accommodation of our ships of war" and it would apply pressure to Japan to finally open its gates. See Norihito Mizuno, "Early Meiji Policies Towards the Ryukyus and the Taiwanese Aboriginal Territories" in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (May, 2009), p. 692.

⁶⁰ In July 1872, the Ryūkyūan government was ordered by Tōkyō to dispatch a congratulatory mission to the Emperor on the success of the Restoration. King Shō Tai's (1843-1901) envoys met Emperor Meiji on 14 September. The Emperor in his speech stressed the ancient cultural and racial ties between Japan and the Ryūkyūs and referred to the islands' long established subordination to Satsuma. Furthermore, he demoted King Shō from ruler of a country to lord of a domain and "a member of the peerage", abolishing the kingdom and incorporating it to Japan proper. This was a proposition made by Inoue Kaoru, the Vice Minister of Finance, on 5 July for safeguarding national security and elevating Tōkyō's international prestige. In September 1872 Yamagata called for the annexation of the Ryūkyū Islands to solve once and for all the status of their sovereignty and to secure the nation's southern border. As expected Soejima gave his consent a month later. The distressing status quo was no more acceptable. To the envoys' objections and negotiations, the government acted swiftly: a 28 September 1872 Daijōkan proclamation annulled every treaty between the kingdom and the foreign powers, namely the Netherlands (1859), France (1855) and the US (1854). The kingdom was demoted to a Japanese domain on 14 November. In the same time, Satsuma's office in the Ryūkyūs was superseded by a Foreign Ministry bureau in Naha and in September 1872 foreign representatives in Japan were notified of Tōkyō's formal assumption of jurisdiction over the islands. However, during the following years (1872 and 1874) the islands still paid tribute to Beijing since Tōkyō, wishing to avoid confrontation on this matter, did not promptly inform the Chinese of these events. See Hideaki Uemura, "The colonial annexation of Okinawa and the logic of international law: the formation of an 'indigenous people' in East Asia" in *Japanese Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 112-116.

⁶¹ The news were firstly communicated to Tōkyō by the diplomat in Beijing Yanagiwara (Zenkō) Sakimitsu (1850-1894) on 27 June 1892 and a month later (17 July) by the Kagoshima authorities. A second report suggested a presumably voluntary Ryūkyūan petition to the central government for action against the aborigines. See Mizuno, "Early Meiji Policies" p. 689.

⁶² In September, the head of the second garrison in Kyūshū Kabayama Sukenori (1837-1922), Japanese Taiwan's first governor-general, made a similar plea. See Uemura, "The colonial annexation", p. 109.

(nominated on 28 February) to carry out his “national rights diplomacy”; or for some, Tōkyō’s designs to dominate Asia. The mission’s official objective was the ratification of the Sino-Japanese treaty and a personal audience with the Chinese Emperor Tongzhi (1856-1875). However, days before his departure Soejima was charged by Emperor Meiji and the Daijōkan with asserting Japanese jurisdiction over the Ryūkyūs, clarifying and investigating China’s jurisdiction limits in Taiwan, conferring with the Chinese Foreign Ministry (Zongli or Tsungli Yamen) on the Korean problem and finally demanding reparations for the murders.⁶³ It is noteworthy that this mission and the contemporary diplomatic-political processes behind and in front of the scenes took place during the Iwakura mission (December 1871-September 1873). This means that key members of the government (Ministers Iwakura Tomomi, Ōkubo Toshimichi, Kido Takayoshi, Itō Hirobumi) were absent and a provisional “caretaker” government (Saigō Takamori, Itagaki Taisuke, Soejima Taneomi, Etō Shimpei, Gotō Shōjirō) had been appointed in their stead. In December 1871 this stand-in cabinet signed a pledge to refrain from any reforms; despite this, military conscription, a supplementary land tax and education laws were enacted during that period.⁶⁴

Soejima, before reaching China, stopped at Kagoshima on 19 March to meet with the Councilor of State and Supreme Commander of the Japanese Armies Saigō Takamori. He was a keen proponent of a punitive expedition to Korea and/or Taiwan and an idol for the ultra-nationalist-expansionist societies. The Soejima mission arrived at Shanghai on two military vessels, on 1 April 1873. On 30 April, the Japanese delegation signed the ratification of the 1871 treaty with Li Hongzhang in Tianjin. Li expressed his distaste for the Japanese adoption of western practices: western style lodging, attire and the presence of a foreign adviser. On 7 May, Soejima arrived in Beijing. His assistants were, the interpreter Tei Ei-nei, the secretary of the embassy Yanagihara and the American diplomat and general Charles William LeGendre (1830-1899).⁶⁵ LeGendre’s profound knowledge of Taiwan⁶⁶ and his

⁶³ Marlene Mayo, “The Korean Crisis of 1873 and Early Meiji Foreign Policy” in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (Aug. 1972), p. 805.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 794.

⁶⁵ Mizuno, “Early Meiji Policies”, p. 713.

⁶⁶ In March 1867, the American ship *Rover* shipwrecked in South Taiwan and its crew was slaughtered by the local tribes. LeGendre, at the time the American Consul to Amoy (Xiamen) in South China, conferred with Qing authorities, travelled extensively in Taiwan, gathered information on the population, natural resources, the geography and the ineffectiveness of Chinese rule and approached the leaders of some aboriginal villages. In June, an American punitive expedition landed and clashed with the aborigines without much success. LeGendre in September 1867 organized another expedition and visited Taiwan for a second time where the following month he negotiated a treaty for the safety of foreign shipwrecked sailors with a prominent local chief, namely Tokitok leader of the Botans. In September 1872, he visited the American Minister in Tōkyō, DeLong. The Minister anxious to expand his influence presented LeGendre to Soejima as a Taiwan expert and the former consul was subsequently employed as an adviser to the Foreign Ministry. From his new post, he submitted a series of memoranda on Taiwan, the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō stressing constantly the threatening British and Russian encroachments and the importance of trade and industrialization for Japan. According to the

intimate knowledge on international law and diplomatic protocol were invaluable to Soejima's efforts in dealing with Qing and Western representatives in Beijing.⁶⁷

On May 20 Soejima met with the British Minister in Beijing Thomas Francis Wade (1818-1895). Wade after discussing the matters of Korea, Taiwan and the Ryūkyūs with the Japanese ambassador reported to London: "Japan contemplated the annexation of Formosa" and had some "design on Korea as well". Soejima, in two later meetings on 3 and 9 June, explained that if Korea insisted to disregard Tōkyō, force may be employed. As for Formosa, the principle that sovereignty over a territory equaled to exercise of actual governance was to be applied, in accordance with international law. To demonstrate that China did not enjoy real authority over the aboriginal part of the island he pointed out Beijing's failure to interfere with the American expedition in 1867. Soejima also discussed his case with the American Minister, Frederick Ferdinand Low (1828-1894) and gained his trust. On 18 June Soejima asked Low for Beijing's memorandum regarding the nature of its tributary relations with Korea; drafted by the Chinese statesman Prince Kung or Gong (1833-1898), it had been presented to the American authorities in the aftermath of the *General Sherman* incident, to absolve the Chinese authorities from any responsibility for the massacre. Low along with other Westerners that wished to open up Korea was glad to provide a copy of the note that in practice established Korea's internal sovereignty and independence in regard to its foreign relations and trade. Although the Korean monarch received investiture from the Emperor of China, the Sino-Korean affiliation was purely ceremonial.⁶⁸ The questions of peace and war remained in the hands of the Korean government. Soejima was glad for obtaining a note that established Korea's independence and hence, it could be dealt with without Beijing's interference.⁶⁹

future Prime Minister, Ōkuma Shigenobu "LeGendre's opinion was that Japan should annex Korea, Formosa, and Manchuria, thus to make a semicircle around China, threaten Russia in Siberia and take the leadership in Asia". See Sandra T. Caruthers, "Anodyne for Expansion: Meiji Japan, the Mormons, and Charles LeGendre" in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (May, 1969), pp. 129-139 and Ernst L. Presseisen, "Roots of Japanese Imperialism: A Memorandum of General LeGendre" in *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Jun., 1957), pp. 108-111.

⁶⁷ A Chinese denial to accept the imperial plenipotentiary or a prolonged delay would suggest disrespect to the Meiji monarch and lead to a diplomatic breakdown. Well aware of this fact Soejima pressed the Tsungli Yamen for a personal audience with Emperor Tongzhi exempt from the humiliating ceremonial etiquette called kowtow (three bows and nine kneelings before the emperor). To the typical postponements and excuses of the Yamen he replied that China had to modernize its ways; it was stubbornly obsessed with trivial courtesy protocols while Asia was being swallowed up by the West. After many inconclusive meetings, he threatened to leave Beijing; on 20 June, Yanagihara informed the Yamen of this decision. The scheme worked and the date of the audience was set for the 29 June 1873. He was the first foreign non-tributary representative to meet the Chinese sovereign in 80 years. See Wayne C. McWilliams, "East Meets East. The Soejima Mission to China, 1873" in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (Autumn, 1975), pp. 255-261.

⁶⁸ Kung's message read: "Although Korea is regarded as a subject state of China, she is completely sovereign in all matters of administration, instructions, prohibitions and laws; China has never inquired, i.e. interfered". See Woong, *The Korean Struggle*, pp. 13-14.

⁶⁹ McWilliams, "East Meets East", pp. 262-263.

On 21 June Yanagihara and Tei conferred with the Yamen Ministers, Mao Ch'an-hsi and Chung Hsun. The lack of written records and the availability of exclusively Japanese sources caused controversy, contradiction and misapprehension: for Soejima the Chinese, as a result of this meeting, gave their consent for a Japanese punitive expedition in Taiwan whereas the Yamen denied even the knowledge of such an intention. Yanagihara was initially interested in the conditions of Macao's concession to Portugal. The Ministers replied that it remained Chinese territory leased to the Portugese. Next Yanagihara asked if the Chinese declaration to the Americans about the status of Korea was still in effect and the Ministers responded affirmatively. Then Yanagihara moved to the subject of Taiwan stating that after the overthrow of the Dutch, China administered only a half of the island and that the ungoverned aborigines in the south had murdered in 1871 "Japanese subjects", implying the Ryūkyūans. He continued: "Therefore the Japanese Government intends, in the near future, to send a punitive expedition against them. But since the aboriginal area is adjacent to territory ruled by the Chinese government, our ambassador thought it best to inform you before our government takes action, less it might cause the slightest disturbance to your territory or cause suspicion on your part and thereby jeopardize the peaceful relation between our two empires". The Chinese responded that since the Ryūkyūs were Chinese this was an internal issue. Yanagihara responded that the islands always belonged to Japan and their inhabitants were entitled to Tōkyō's protection. He subsequently asked why Beijing did nothing to punish and govern the aborigines who had attacked foreigners on many occasions. These acts of aggression could attract the occupation of the island by a foreign power, a dangerous scenario for both China and Japan. The Yamen Ministers responded that two kinds of aborigines existed in Taiwan, "raw barbarians" and "ripe" ones, those who abode by the Chinese rule.⁷⁰ They added that they had not punished the natives "because they were beyond the reach of our government and customs".⁷¹

On 29 June, an enthusiastic Soejima reported to Prime Minister Sanjō Sanetomi that he had fully succeeded in his mission: he claimed to have obtained a Yamen declaration "that Chinese political rule did not extent to the aboriginal area of Formosa and that the aborigines were beyond the pale of Chinese civilization". China renounced any jurisdiction there and had consented to a Japanese military expedition. He further stressed that Beijing was not responsible for Korean policies and hence it acknowledged Japan's right to intervene in Korea. According to the ambassador, Beijing did not question Tōkyō's claims regarding the Ryūkyūs either.⁷² A careful study of the aforementioned attests that these declarations were unjustified and one-

⁷⁰ On contemporary maps, Taiwan was depicted as a Qing possession but the extent of the actual Chinese rule was questionable. With this in mind Soejima and in this case Yanagihara was instructed to discuss the prospect of punishing the natives and of compensation for the victims' families. In any case if Beijing was unwilling to undertake or even join the expedition it was called upon to give its permission. See Mayo, "The Korean Crisis", p. 806.

⁷¹ McWilliams, "East Meets East", p. 265-266.

⁷² Ibid., pp. 266-267.

sided. Soejima's failure to obtain a written formal agreement is at the very least suspicious. Before his triumphant return at Yokohama on 25 July 1873 he met with Li on 8 July in Tianjin in an amicable spirit. The Qing statesman's polite reception was not a byproduct of his unfamiliarity with the proceedings that had taken place in Beijing as one might think. On the contrary, he was aware of the Japanese maneuvers but he was convinced that if the Americans failed in 1867 to subdue Taiwan's aborigines, the weaker Asian neighbours had no chance.⁷³

During Soejima's absence, the elaboration of the policy to be followed in regard to the Korean problem was well underway. The Korean issue had become the focal point of a broader debate about foreign policy. Saigō suggested that a Taiwan expedition was necessary as a means "to give vent to [the anger over the reduction of samurai pensions] outside the country". On the other hand, Ōkuma reported that the contemptuous attitude and insults of the Koreans were more infuriating than some uncivilized tribe's aggression. Ueno Kagenori, the stand-in Foreign Minister, proposed sending the army to protect Japanese residents in Korea and escort another envoy. This suggestion, espoused by Itagaki Taisuke among others, was discussed in the Council of State on 12 June 1873. Saigō, contemplating on the possibility of a foreign (Russian)⁷⁴ intervention to "protect" Korea, suggested he serve as the imperial emissary in Seoul; in case of hostilities or his death, Japan would obtain an excuse to attack. Itagaki, Etō⁷⁵ and Gotō agreed with this plan and Saigō was named ambassador on 17 August 1873. The deed was approved by the Emperor the following day. All that Prime Minister Sanjō could do was to delay Saigō's departure until Iwakura's return. Soejima had recently returned after his success in China and wished to undertake this task personally.⁷⁶ Iwakura, Ōkubo⁷⁷ and Kido returned from their mission abroad in September 1872, May and June 1873 respectively, convinced of Japan's unpreparedness to engage in war and of its relative backwardness in relation to the western nations. Japan at the moment was in need of internal stability and of a gradual far reaching "enlightenment" program as Iwakura disclosed to British Minister Parkes on 8 October 1873. That meant domestic reconstruction and revision of the unequal treaties. Kido too, warned against military ventures in either Taiwan or

⁷³ Ibid., p. 273.

⁷⁴ During the distressing dispute over Sakhalin, Soejima requested Russia's neutrality from the ambassador Eugene Butzov in the event of war with Korea on 6 March 1873. He also maintained cordial relations with the Russian Minister during his stay in Beijing. Saint Petersburg having claimed the whole of the Sakhalin Island was keen for Japan's attention to shift on Korea or Taiwan. See Mayo, "The Korean Crisis", pp. 801-809.

⁷⁵ During the October debate, Councilor Etō, expansionist and preoccupied about the future of the samurai, advocated a Korean expedition to restore the nation's prestige. See Ibid., p. 812.

⁷⁶ Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 38-40.

⁷⁷ In early October Ōkubo presented his seven points memorandum to the rest of the Council, advocating restraint. The main anti-war arguments were budgetary restrictions, the incomplete modernization programme, Russian and British aggression since Japan and Korea would be weakened by the war and the vassal-like status that Tōkyō still held in its relations with the foreign powers. See Nobutaka Ike, "Triumph of the Peace Party in Japan in 1873" in *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (May, 1943), p. 293-294.

Korea in August. Saigō however, nourished by warrior and ethnocentric ideals, enjoyed the support of the impoverished former samurai in search of glory and employment mainly in the southern parts of the country, and of many government members. He had already dispatched two of his most trusted followers to China and Korea in August 1872 to gather intelligence on the enemy's military strength.⁷⁸ As Itō Hirobumi, Minister of Industry at the time, pointed out in the fall of 1873 to Kido: "army officers from Satsuma have insisted on the attack on Korea from the start and they have agitated for this policy all over the country". He added that "two thirds of the men in the Imperial Guard lean towards the view that Korea should be subjugated".⁷⁹ Two rival factions, ambassadors against caretakers, cautious politicians against less cautious expansionists within the Daijōkan were formed. During the ministerial debates Saigō's wing seemed to take the advantage. The rival faction submitted its resignation but was reinstated according to the wishes of Emperor Meiji, who shared a special personal bond with Iwakura.⁸⁰

By the time Iwakura returned, war plans had already been devised. Saigō and Soejima were considering the dispatch of 50,000 men in Korea and 10,000 in Taiwan. Korea being rich in resources was able to sustain an occupation army of this size. Secret agents and students were also sent to gather intelligence at three fronts: Sakhalin, Korea and Taiwan. Military preparation and war seemed imminent despite Soejima's misleading reassurances in April 1872 to the British charge d'affaires that "war with Korea would be a calamity to Japan". However even among the "seikan" side there was not a consensus on exactly what to do with Korea; occupation, punitive expedition or just a show of force were all on the table. One thing was certain; Meiji leaders were willing to use force to push their agenda in Korea. In any case Iwakura stressed the financial burden of a war for a poor country and the priority of juridical, educational and economic reforms. He appeared unmoved when some samurai groups proposed to raise funds, ammunition and volunteers for the assault because a "private" expedition of this kind would be beyond the government's control. Yamagata Aritomo in August 1873 responded to Saigō that the army was not ready. He made the same remark in July 1874: "The army is not ready to extend Japan's authority to areas outside of the country. Or to fight with China..." and again: "Our army is in the midst of reorganization at the present time; but in a year or two, the foundation of the military system will be established, and there probably will not be any obstacles to prevent the sending of an army to the continent". Navy Minister Katsu (Awa) Kaishū told Sanjō that more ships had to be bought from abroad before the undertaking of an expedition.⁸¹ Kido expressed his opinion on the matter: "Let us postpone matters for now. We can decide later what to do about Korea and Taiwan. It

⁷⁸ Hilary Conroy, *The Japanese seizure of Korea: 1868–1910. A study of realism and idealism in international relations*, (Philadelphia 1974), p. 36.

⁷⁹ Duus, *The Abacus*, p. 40.

⁸⁰ Calman, *The Nature and Origins*, pp. 134–135.

⁸¹ Duus, *The Abacus*, p. 42.

will not be too late to act when we are properly prepared”.⁸² This kind of reasoning spurred many scholars to believe that both wings envisaged a plan of imperial domination in Asia; they just could not agree on the timing. Japan seemingly had the mission to conquer its neighbours but at the time and until it was materially and diplomatically prepared, had to show restraint. Discontent and nationalistic sentiments of revenge and expansion had to be put on hold. Despite this climate, restraint eventually prevailed, since a sizeable part of the government turned down the notorious bellicose project at the moment. On 23 October Iwakura persuaded the emperor to withdraw Saigō as ambassador, a fact that pushed Saigō, Etō, Itagaki and Gotō into tendering their resignation two days later.⁸³ Infuriated and humiliated Saigō led the Satsuma rebellion in 1877 and Etō the Saga rebellion in 1874 against government forces.⁸⁴ Etō and Itagaki established Japan’s first political party in January 1874 before the former’s execution. The tensions and the strong emotions that the heated debate generated tore the country apart. A complicated decision regarding war or peace or in other words Japan’s imperialistic prospects was sufficient to plunge the entire population of 30 million and the government in chaos, resentment, assassinations, riots, division and even suicides⁸⁵ only 5 years after the formation of the modern Japanese state. The 1873 political crisis did not lead to an attack and the boiling discontent kept menacingly building up until another release valve was found, the Japanese expedition to Taiwan in May 1874.

The first tangible outcome of Soejima’s efforts was the incorporation of the Ryūkyū Islands to the Empire. On 12 July 1874, the islands’ jurisdiction was passed from the Foreign Ministry to the Internal Affairs (Interior) Ministry. The former kingdom was granted a subsidy and its debts were annulled. Beijing by supposedly giving its approval to Tōkyō’s expedition in Taiwan seemed to recognize the Ryūkyūs as a Japanese possession. Indeed, the treaty that followed this expedition, signed on 21 October 1874, recognized Ryūkyūans as Japanese subjects. However, in November 1874, the island’s government, despite being under the control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, dispatched a diplomatic mission to China as if it represented an independent nation. Internal Affairs Minister Ōkubo planned legal and

⁸² Mayo, “The Korean Crisis”, pp. 798-799, 814-815.

⁸³ Iwakura reported to the Emperor: “Upon serious consideration, I venture to say that it is not more than 4 or 5 years since the Restoration, the foundation of the nation is not very solid, political institutions have not yet been well organized, and, though internal security seems to be maintained, there is no telling what trouble may occur. Under such circumstances dealings with foreign countries should not be viewed lightly”. See Duus, *The Abacus*, p. 42.

⁸⁴ Calman, *The Nature and Origins*, p. 136.

⁸⁵ In July 1871, a Kagoshima samurai committed suicide in front of the Imperial Council building to express his disapproval for Korea’s proposed conquest. In the note found on him he wrote that Japan was poor and had many problems and “no time to condemn the impoliteness of Korea”. In March 1872, a Foreign Ministry official was arrested for plotting to organize a private expedition against Seoul. On 14 January 1874, Iwakura was assaulted and wounded by advocates in favour of Korea’s conquest and the following month anti-government disturbances took place in Nagasaki and Fukuoka. See Conroy, *The Japanese seizure*, pp. 51-52.

educational reforms as well as the construction of army posts to bend the “Ryūkyū domain’s stubborn and strict adherence” to “ancient outdated laws”.⁸⁶ Diplomatic relations with China were suspended and the government’s uncertainty on how to handle the question as a matter of international law was evident. The Ministry turned to the French legal adviser Gustave Émile Boissonade de Fontarabie (1825-1910) who submitted his suggestions on 17 March. Boissonade perceived the Ryūkyūs as a colony and not as an integral part of the mainland and thus proposed an indirect system of administration through the local dynasty similar to the British model. The Ministry rejected his rationale arguing that Meiji Japan had inherited territorial rights over the territories that were previously its “subject states” and exerted direct sovereignty over them. Instead of a colonial policy a straightforward annexationist one, in line with Ōkubo’s directives was to be implemented by the Ministry’s secretary, Matsuda Michiyuki (1832-1882). Invested by the emperor as “Disposition Officer” on 10 June 1875, he arrived at the island’s capital Naha exactly a month later accompanied by a number of reformers. On 14 July Matsuda presented to Prince Nakijin Chōfu (1847-1915), who represented the ailing domain lord Shō Tai, a series of demands. Prohibition on sending and receiving tributary envoys from and to China, legal and administrative reforms, dispatch of 10 students to study at Tōkyō, abolition of the Diplomatic House of Ryūkyū in Fujian China, installation of a Japanese garrison and finally Shō’s visit to Tōkyō to express his gratitude.⁸⁷ Despite Matsuda’s threats the Prince rejected these terms and Shō Tai did not travel to Tōkyō, facts that offended the emperor’s honour and drove the infuriated Japanese envoy to request the central government’s “abolishment of [the] Ryūkyū domain” on 25 September.⁸⁸ The ever present Enomoto agreed that a *fait accompli* would be the best solution at the moment.⁸⁹

Ryūkyū officials rejected Matsuda’s demands and submitted a letter of complaint on 15 October 1875 to Tōkyō. The unyielding Minister of Internal Affairs carried forward with the process of gradually infringing the islands’ internal authority; despite local protests on 1 August 1876, legal jurisdiction and policing rights were formally passed to the Ministry. On 3 September, a military garrison consisting of 25 men was installed. The Ryūkyū government sent secretly envoys to China asking for help. In March 1877, they met with Qing officials who, despite previous assurances to Tōkyō, asserted that they considered the islands a Chinese “outer domain”. The Chinese government pressed for a conference that would come up with an international solution and sent the first Chinese Minister in Japan, He Ruzhang to deal with the matter.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Uemura, “The colonial annexation”, p. 117.

⁸⁷ Rosa Caroli, “L’edificazione del moderno stato giapponese e la definizione dei suoi limiti territoriali - L’intervento del Giappone Meiji nelle Ryūkyū” in *Il Giappone*, vol. XXXI, pp. 91-92.

⁸⁸ Uemura, “The colonial annexation”, p. 119.

⁸⁹ Caroli, “L’edificazione del moderno stato”, p. 95.

⁹⁰ Minister He met with Foreign Minister Terashima Munenori in September 1878 and on 7 October he accused Japan for “untrustworthy, unjust, unfeeling and unreasonable” policies. He added: “The

In spring 1878 Ryūkyūan officials in Tōkyō approached western representatives asking for mediation and protested against Japanese oppression. On 26 January 1879, Matsuda complained to Prince Nakijin for breaching the ban regarding foreign diplomatic relations. On 11 March 1879, accompanied by 160 police officers and 400 soldiers he presented an ultimatum; the Ryūkyūan king had to evacuate his premises in the castle of Shuri in Naha by the 31st the date by which the Japanese forces would occupy the palace.⁹¹ Military force and not gradual incorporation or international law led to the abolishment of the Ryūkyū domain (han) and the establishment of the Okinawa ken (prefecture) on 4 April 1879. Tōkyō appeared as a crusader against the anachronistic Asian world order securing international legitimacy and demonstrating its prestigious “civilized” status to the West.

Qing China was beginning to see Japan as a constant threat due to Tōkyō’s worrisome interventions in Taiwan and in its tributary states of Korea and the Ryūkyūs. Minister He’s protests, before the official annexation, were bluntly rejected by Terashima who professed that Chinese investiture was primarily ceremonial and did not constitute effective rule. Li Hongzhang feared the formulation of a precedent that could gradually deconstruct the tributary system and threaten the very existence of the Qing Empire.⁹² The loss of the Ryūkyūs and of North Vietnam (Tonkin) to France in 1885 were certainly not auspicious omens.⁹³ Li expressed his disapproval of the Meiji policy in the Ryūkyū to the Japanese Minister in Beijing, Mori Arinori in

Japanese have neither mercy nor reason. They are like crazy dogs bullying others as they please...”. See Uemura, “The colonial annexation”, p. 120.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 122.

⁹² Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire*, pp. 159-161.

⁹³ Before the outbreak of the Sino-French war in August 1884, the French chargé d'affaires in Japan Ulric de Viel-Castel implied to his government an alliance with Tōkyō against Beijing. On 13 June 1883, he informed Paris that sufficient supplies and “considerable enough” troops were available in Japan. On 6 June statesman Paul-Armand Challemlacour (1827-1896) discussed with the Japanese ambassador in Paris, Hachisuka the revision of the unequal treaties and the “common interests of Japan and France towards China”. Enomoto acting as ambassador to Beijing notified Foreign Minister Kaoru on 26 April 1883 that his French colleague appeared inclined to offer an anti-Chinese alliance. Inoue having prioritized the maintenance of peace rejected both French suggestions. The following year Lieutenant General Miura Gorō (1847-1926) seemed more cooperative. In Paris, he and General Baptiste Marie Edouard Campenon (1819-1891) negotiated Japan’s entry in the war, a French loan and the revision of the treaties. The coup d’état that took place in Seoul in December of that year, which will be examined further on, could act as a *casus belli* against China and Korea. At the same time, public opinion appeared favourable to the prospect of an armed intervention. Inoue though was adamant. The destruction of the Chinese forces by the French and the weakening of Qing influence were sufficient. On 15 December 1884, French Prime Minister Ferry authorized his Minister in Japan Sienkiewicz to negotiate an alliance but the latter, contemptuous of Tōkyō’s military capabilities, never really pursued this goal. Miura continued to advertise the benefits of an alliance with a Great Power during the month of February 1885 and during the following month Kuroda Kiyotaka went to Saigon to have talks with the French officials stationed there. Sienkiewicz in August wrote to the Governor of French Indochina that Kuroda was visiting “under the pretext of studying the organization of our colonial troops in Cochinchina and Tonking” but “the mission would try to penetrate into Siam”. In June the war ended and the opportunity of joint action against Beijing vanished. See Richard Sims, *French Policy Towards The Bakufu and Meiji Japan 1854-95*, (Richmond 1998), pp. 121-181.

September 1877. Minister He, convinced of Japan's political instability, economic feebleness and military vulnerability, proposed to his superiors to adopt a more adamant stance in regard to Tōkyō's provocations. If negotiations failed dispatching troops and warships to aid Beijing's hard-pressed vassals had to be organized in accordance with his May 1878 report.⁹⁴

In the meantime Tōkyō implemented an assimilation policy to cultivate loyalty and incorporate the future generations of the islanders, now named Okinawans, as law-abiding Japanese subjects. Some Meiji leaders like Ōkuma and Kidō did not consider the Ryūkyūans as Japanese. However, Tōkyō finally assumed the costs of the islands' administration for security reasons.⁹⁵ In 1879 the US president, Ulysses S. Grant embarked on a world tour. At the request of Prince Kung and Li he stopped over at Beijing and Tōkyō in June and July to offer his advice on the Ryūkyū dispute. The negotiations between Japan and China, mediated by Grant, continued despite the former annexing the islands.⁹⁶ In an effort to find a peaceful and viable resolution the Japanese government suggested in April 1880, a draft according to which two islands of the Ryūkyū chain would be ceded to China in exchange for some trading rights and the "most favoured nation" status to Japan.⁹⁷ The everlasting search for parity with the West seemed to be drawing to an end when Beijing approved the settlement presented by Shishido Tamaki, Japanese ambassador to China, on 21 October. Li, however, opposed the ratification of the treaty and declared that China was prepared to go to war to defend its legitimate rights. The inaction that followed signified that China were no longer interested in forcefully disputing Japan's claims and on January 5 1881 Shishido formally informed Beijing that Tōkyō considered the matter of the

⁹⁴ Kitaoka, "Inception of a Modern Relationship", p. 24.

⁹⁵ Meiji authorities in the first years sought to preserve the native customs to placate any dissidents. The islands in contrast to Hokkaidō had a long political tradition and the native population was not a minority as the Ainu were. A gradualist approach was thus adopted. Modern institutions were slowly taking the place of the outmoded Ryūkyūan that were deemed by the new rulers as barbaric. The Japanisation process was centered around a swift language education program. Supporting pillars of the assimilation policy were the fiscal, land, military and administrative reforms and the benevolent civilizing of the primitive natives. For this purpose common traditions were reinvented, the image of the emperor as fatherly figure was emphasized and the ideology of a joint Japanese identity was deliberately promoted. These islands and Hokkaidō were integral parts of Japan (naichi) "since the ancient times" and not its colonies. After years of gradual acculturation, in the early 20th century the Japanese government decided that the Japanese national conciseness in the natives' minds had advanced to a degree that they were ready to receive the benefits of Japan's civilization: the constitution, land reform, conscription and the electoral law were eventually enacted there in contrast to Boissonade's suggestions. After 50 years Okinawa was finally considered satisfactorily assimilated enough and was fully integrated to the Japanese state. See Eiji Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 1: Okinawa 1818-1972 - Inclusion and Exclusion*, (Melbourne, 2014), pp. 36-69 and Rosa Caroli, *Il mito dell'omogeneità giapponese: storia di Okinawa*, (Milan, 1999), pp. 73-142.

⁹⁶ The news of Grant's visit to the Far East urged Tōkyō to put the situation under control as soon as possible. Matsuda's swift invasion in March 1879 was designed to present Grant, Beijing or anyone that may have had objections with a fait accompli. See George H. Kerr, *Okinawa: The History of an Island People*, (Boston-Tokyo, 2000), pp. 382-383.

⁹⁷ Caroli, "L'edificazione del moderno stato", p. 101.

Ryūkyū islands settled.⁹⁸ Japan this way secured its southern border from foreign encroachment; employment of sheer force and infringement of the native population's rights were to be used later in other territories as well.

Having examined Japan's northern islands and the southern tip of the empire we must now turn our gaze towards the continent. For it was in Korea where Japanese colonialism reached its apogee and clashed fiercely with the Chinese and Western imperialistic interests. As a result of the continental war of 1894-1895 Tōkyō obtained Taiwan, its first ever "outer land" (gaichi), as the Ryūkyū Islands and Hokkaidō consisted parts of the mainland (naichi) or Japan's internal colonies. For some scholars the Ryūkyū Islands and Hokkaidō were also gaichi despite the fact that both territories were under the indirect control of Japanese from the time of the Edo period, and had long-standing cultural ties with the mainland. In any case it can be argued that the colonization of Taiwan and Korea represented the extension of Japanese power beyond its Edo period sphere of influence.

Shigeru Moriyama was sent in the spring of 1874 to Seoul to open negotiations once more in Saigō's place. Despite his efforts, his aforementioned war plans and his threat to send battleships in April 1874 the negotiations continued only to reach yet again stalemate and he left Pusan on 21 September.⁹⁹ Almost a year later to the date, on 20 September 1875, the Japanese vessel *Un'yō* surveying Korea's western coasts was fired upon by the batteries of the fort at Kanghwa island. The Japanese landed a party, exchanged fire and destroyed the forts. The news was communicated to Tōkyō by Inoue on 28 September and on the following day it was decided to send battleships in Pusan to protect the Japanese residents there. The government after years of frustration and unrest found an opportunity to employ and impose western diplomatic practices on Korea. After the signing of the Sakhalin-Kuril Islands Exchange treaty in May 1875, Enomoto was confident that Russia would not intervene in Korea and derail the good momentum of Saint Petersburg-Tōkyō relations. Li Hongzhang advised Seoul, because of its unpreparedness to comply with the Japanese demands, the American Minister in Japan John Armor Bingham (1815-1900) approved the idea of opening Korea following the Perry model in November and Foreign Minister Terashima obtained the moral support of the US and British legations in Tōkyō.¹⁰⁰ The foreign powers after their numerous failed efforts appeared favourable to integrating Korea in the global capitalistic network. Mori Arinori met, as Japan's Minister in China, with Prince Kung on 9 December 1875 and extracted from the Prince another declaration that Korea, though subordinate to China, was free to choose its own policies. The Chinese would come to regret their naivety.¹⁰¹ Tōkyō

⁹⁸ Hikomatsu Kamikawa, *Japan-American Diplomatic Relations in the Meiji-Taisho Era*, (Tokyo 1958), pp. 105-106.

⁹⁹ Mizuno, *Japan and its East Asian neighbors*, pp. 236-241.

¹⁰⁰ Kamikawa, *Japan-American Diplomatic Relations*, pp. 110-111.

¹⁰¹ Later, on 10 January 1876 when a Foreign Ministry's communication informed Beijing of the armed mission in Korea, the Tzongli Yamen responded in an ambiguous manner by stating that the country

was ready to capitalize the *Un'yō* incident having secured its rear.¹⁰² Throughout 1875 Ōkubo and Matsukata in the Finance Ministry stressed the financial burden of a conflict and the priority of regaining Japan's tariff autonomy. Kido, on the contrary, was anxious to take action and volunteered to act as Japan's envoy in Korea in October "for the glory of the empire and the security of our people". In December, the government appointed Kuroda as Minister Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, with Inoue as his Deputy, to demand compensation for the incident and sign an unequal treaty. In case of another stalemate military plans were laid by Yamagata and General Torio Koyata (1847-1905) providing for the deployment of a division and of 4 or 5 warships against Korea. Kuroda and Inoue arrived at Kanghwa on 11 February 1876 accompanied by 400 troops. After the arrival of more troops Kuroda told the Korean authorities that he had brought with him 4,000 men and they had to choose between a treaty and war.¹⁰³ Kuroda demanded an apology presenting *Un'yō* as the aggravated party despite the ship's unauthorized entrance in Korean territorial waters and the killing of 35 Koreans soldiers. Kuroda responded to Korean objections by returning to his ship. Western imperialists and gunboat "diplomats" could not be prouder. The Koreans, who had never forgotten Hideyoshi's atrocities,¹⁰⁴ were threatened once more by a nation that had always benefited from the cultural ties with Korea and had repaid them with pirate raids and destruction.¹⁰⁵

On 26 February 1876 Korea was finally opened to foreigners with the Korea-Japan Treaty of Amity modelled on Japan's Ansei treaties. A vulnerable and isolated Seoul, after Beijing's tacit consent, could no longer resist the implementation of international law, at least as Japan and the consonant Western powers intended it. The same kind of provisions that were imposed on Japan by the foreigners and were regarded as a "national disgrace", were now enforced on an Asian "backward" nation. Korea was declared an independent nation and Japan its equal according to the "law of nations".¹⁰⁶ The trade of opium was banned. Moreover, Wōnsan and Inchon in

was a Chinese dependency and that Tōkyō's actions constituted an external interference in its domestic affairs. Mori in disagreement obtained at least Beijing's consent to negotiate with Korean authorities since China was unwilling to take full responsibility for its "vassal's" actions. See Brahm Swaroop Agrawal, "The opening of Korea and the Kanghwa Treaty of 1876" in *The Pacific World, Lands, Peoples and History of the Pacific 1500-1900*, ed. M. Caprio, K. Matsuda, (Hampshire, 2007), pp. 150-151.

¹⁰² Three Japanese vessels bombarded Pusan in April 1875 as a show of force. Furthermore, many consider *Un'yō*'s role as deliberately provocative, following Tōkyō's precise orders aiming to incite hostilities. Sasaki Takayuki (1830-1910), a contemporary bureaucrat, wrote in his diary: "I suspect that our side caused this incident. A naval officer told me that Inoue had mentioned to a colleague that it would be fortunate if Korea fired first". See Mizuno, *Japan and its East Asian neighbors*, p. 242.

¹⁰³ Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 47-48.

¹⁰⁴ Conroy, *The Japanese seizure*, p. 21.

¹⁰⁵ Woong, *The Korean Struggle*, p. 68.

¹⁰⁶ It should be noted that the honorifics used for the countries and their respective monarchs implied Seoul's inferior status in the drafts of the Japanese treaty. Japan despite the adoption of modern diplomatic practices had evidently not abandoned the traditional customs of the Far East yet. As a result of the Korean protests, the terms in the final draft were equal. The Koreans on the other hand

addition to Pusan were to be opened to trade and Japanese consuls were installed there. In November 1880, the first Japanese legation was inaugurated in Seoul.¹⁰⁷ The exchange of diplomatic representatives was agreed as well as the rights of conducting surveying missions and of docking for supplies in Korean harbours. The right of extraterritoriality was also established. Obsolete diplomatic practices were abolished. The supplementary trade treaty of 24 August 1876 was even more unequal: Japanese imports and exports were exempt of any tariff duties; the circulation of Japanese currency was allowed and Japanese merchants were permitted to lease land in the ports and undertake their businesses virtually unhindered within a radius of 4 kilometres from the ports.¹⁰⁸

This is how Japanese political and economic influence became predominant in Korea. China naturally sought to reassert its authority in a typical imperialist manner.

were more preoccupied with title denominations than the far more substantial extraterritoriality clause, demonstrating an antiquated mentality. See Mizuno, *Japan and its East Asian neighbors*, pp. 246-247.

¹⁰⁷ Besides the consular authorities in Seoul, 11 Japanese officers undertook the protection of the embassy; after 1882 their number increased to 28. In April 1880, the Wönsan's consulate was guarded by 32 police officers. Approximately 11 officers were stationed in Pusan and Inchon respectively to maintain social order. They were funded out of the consular budget and the community's subsidies. After 1899 consular offices were inaugurated in 10 Korean cities. In China, a further 4 Japanese consulates in different cities were added to the ones operating at Shanghai, Tianjin and Xiamen (Amoy) after 1896, following Western paradigm. In the Japanese enclaves (settlements) consular officers, besides their typical police work, oversaw the management of internal administration, sanitation and public health expanding Japan's authority and prestige overseas. See Erik Esselstrom, *Crossing Empire's Edge: Foreign Ministry Police and Japanese Expansionism in Northeast Asia*, (Honolulu 2009), pp. 13-41.

¹⁰⁸ Woong, *The Korean Struggle*, pp. 58-71. These favourable conditions attracted so many Japanese labourers, Buddhist priests, artisans and poor farmers that in the late 19th century Korea became the most popular overseas destination after Hawaii and the continental US. As for the entrepreneurs that crossed the Tsushima Strait, they were mostly petty merchants since Japanese capitalism was in its infancy and capital scarce in this initial phase. In the 1870s and 1880s they mainly sold Western manufactured goods first imported in Japan and then channeled to the Korean market. Around the end of the century, Korea started importing Japanese goods domestically produced such as cotton products. In any case in the early 1890s Tōkyō imported 90% of Korea's exports and exported back 50% of its foreign trade whereas 70% of the merchant ships docking in Korean ports were Japanese. Korean agricultural products and the revenue from the export trade came to be considered important to Japan's industrialization with the passing of years and seemed to legitimize Tōkyō's economic control. This fact does not mean that Japan had become an industrialized, prosperous nation. Government officials in 1896 and 1898 still lamented the lack of private investments and of Japanese owned businesses abroad. In 1896 74% of the value of the country's non-official exports and 70% of the value of the non-official imports were still handled by foreign merchants. The arrogance of the Japanese merchants, their "frugality", contrary to Confucian moral ethics, and their animated protests every time Seoul banned the export of grain due to domestic shortages made them a parasitic nuisance; the Koreans saw them as "beggars" and "dwarf barbarians". The Japanese immigrants on the other hand looked down on the uncivilized, wasteful and lazy natives. Even Inoue found the Japanese behavior arrogant, rude and a cause for future Korean hatred. The Japanese community, through its local consuls, frequently asked Tōkyō's intervention when felt oppressed by Seoul's or Beijing's economic policies. The immigrants also published their own newspapers, *Chōsen Jihō* and *Kanjō shinpō* in the 1890s that reported every suspicious Russian move in the country. The settlers actively supported the Japanese forces during the Sino-Japanese war by gathering supplies, building barracks and serving as interpreters. See Jun Uchida, *Brokers of Empire: Japanese Settler Colonialism in Korea, 1876-1945*, (London 2011), pp. 37-50 and Clarence V. Gilliland, Japan and Korea since 1910 in *Annual Publication of the Historical Society of Southern California*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (1920), pp. 48-52.

A Tzongli Yamen memorandum on 21 August 1879 mentioned Tōkyō's "cunning" project to "master the Orient" and "turn her expansionist design to Korea in some future day". Viceroy Li alarmed by the loss of the Ryūkyūs persuaded Korean officials to counterweight Japanese influence by signing commercial treaties with the West that would breach the Japanese trade monopoly.¹⁰⁹ For the Meiji leadership Seoul's independence constituted a strategic concern of the highest priority due to Korea's geographic proximity and inability to defend itself.

Korea's backwardness and feebleness made it an easy prey for the Powers. For Major Meckel, the famous German military instructor, the peninsula was "a dagger pointed at the heart of Japan", a dramatic phrase used to denote the danger of Korea falling into the hands of a Great Power. In October 1892, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs disclosed to the Council of State: "Great Powers, including Russia, are now coveting Korea like meat on the table. No one but the imperial state can undertake the responsibility of saving Korea by maintaining international law. If Korea were seized by a Great Power such as Russia as a result of our neglecting this matter, it would represent a permanent harm and an imminent danger to the imperial country". An unknown official of the Ministry added: "Although association with Korea is of no utility, it would be invaded by Russia if it were left alone. This could cause great harm to Japan. We help Korea not because we love Korea but because we love Japan".¹¹⁰ Korea had to be protected, reformed, civilized and "independent" for Japan's sake. The only question was what exactly that independence meant. A December 1884 note by a political group to Itō Hirobumi read: "The war against China is our greatest wish" and "If by some stroke of ill fortune, Korea becomes a base for foreign vessels, our country will not be able to maintain the peace of the Japan Sea... Hence, to help Korea achieve complete independence, and to deepen the friendship between our nations, is ultimately to protect our own independence".¹¹¹ This deep anxiety explains the struggle for power with other nations and the constant interventions in Korea during the following decades.

In February 1881, the Korean government appeared to finally embrace the notions of "enlightenment". An administrative reform was followed by the dispatch of reform-minded and pro-western officials in Japan to study the country's modern institutions in early 1881. The military attaché of the Japanese legation was commissioned to train part of the Korean army according to western standards in May 1881. On 23 July 1882, the Imo mutiny broke out when frustrated troops, unpaid for 13 months, attacked the royal palace and the Japanese legation killing the Japanese

¹⁰⁹ According to the aforementioned Yamen memorandum, treaty relations were useful because "if Japan and Korea began fighting in the future [the other treaty states] could all stand up and admonish the wrongdoer", meaning Japan. See Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire*, pp. 166-167.

¹¹⁰ Mizuno, *Japan and its East Asian neighbors*, pp. 208-209.

¹¹¹ A December 1880 edition of the newspaper *Chōya Shinbun* declared in unison: "Korea is our northern gate. If we do not guard the gate our own independence is not at all secure... If Korea comes under the occupation of another people, we must not abandon it even for a day". See Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 49-51.

instructors.¹¹² The Japanese Minister in Seoul since 1877, Hanabusa Yoshimoto and his staff fled to Inchon and returned to Japan after being rescued by a British vessel on the 26th. Korean regent Daewongun found the opportunity to regain control over his rivals, the family of Queen Min that favoured a conservative pro-Qing approach. On 4 and 13 August Beijing sent warships and land forces respectively to impose its direct control upon Seoul. The Daewongun was arrested and a pro-Chinese faction took control of the government.¹¹³ In September-October 1882 Seoul agreed to a new commercial treaty that granted to Chinese merchants trade privileges over the Westerners and the Japanese. Beijing proceeded to the colonization of Korea asserting its tributary rights: it installed a Minister Resident in Seoul to advise the government, granted loans, undertook the reorganization of the Korean army and placed Mollendorf, a German national, to handle Korea's customs administration; according to Li the "Japanese fear Germany the most and dislike Mollendorf, so we will send him to Korea in order to prevent their licentiousness". Tōkyō's ire can be summarized by the plea made by Fukuzawa, who was always concerned about the peninsula's future, in the summer of 1882, to impose a Japanese protectorate there. Despite the belligerent voices and the mobilization of the reserves in August, ultimately restraint prevailed. Japan was at the moment too weak to confront the Qing forces and a collaborative, conciliatory approach was deemed best. Besides according to the Finance Ministry, Matsukata's deflation measures restricted the Navy to procuring just three warships a year. In the end of 1881 the Japanese Naval Minister Kabayama lamented the state of the Navy and asked for 24 vessels in three years starting from 1883.¹¹⁴

Hanabusa returned escorted by Japanese troops to protect the legation and demanded an indemnity so as not to initiate hostilities. Beijing however, interpreted this gesture as another one of Inoue's "poisonous tricks", who it was believed to have collaborated with the Regent in the latter's attempt to oust King Gojong and regain control. With treaty of Chemulp'o (Incheon) on 30 August 1882, Seoul agreed to pay an indemnity of 550,000 yen as reparations for the loss of life and damages that the Japanese had suffered, to punish the assailants, to permit the stationing of Japanese troops in the capital and to send a mission of apology to Tōkyō for the Imo incident.

¹¹² The riot was directed mainly against the Japanese revealing the strong anti-Japanese sentiment of the Korean masses. See Junji Banno, "Japanese diplomatic attitudes towards Korea, 1880-1885" in *Papers on Far Eastern History*, vol. 21 (1980), pp. 63-65.

¹¹³ Kitaoka, "Inception of a Modern Relationship", p. 30.

¹¹⁴ Kabayama commented on 15 November 1882: "When we see the recent attitude of the Chinese government, we notice that it is concentrating its energy on armament increases, especially on the increase of naval forces. China has now more than sixty warships, and many warships, gun-boats, and torpedo boats are now under construction both in China and overseas". In June 1883, Yamagata asked again for the expansion of the country's arsenal due to the rumour that Qing forces would be deployed in the East after the end of Sino-French war. The Japanese Consul-General in Shanghai, Tadamichi Shinagawa reported to the Foreign Minister on 5 July 1883 that Beijing circulated these rumours to intimidate Tōkyō and dispel any thoughts of a Japanese-French alliance. Accordingly in late July, the Japanese Ministers in Seoul and Beijing reassured the Qing authorities that Japan would never ally itself to Paris. See Banno, "Japanese diplomatic attitudes", pp. 66-69.

When this mission arrived in October, the Meiji government returned 400,000 yen of the indemnity “to be used for reform in Korea”.¹¹⁵

In October 1882, another mission by a Korean pro-reformist faction met with Foreign Minister Inoue to ask for Tōkyō’s assistance. Inoue called for the government’s more direct support to Korean reformists and a small loan of 170,000 yen was subsequently arranged.¹¹⁶ After the mutiny Japan and Qing China, the latter with the sturdy collaboration of the Min family, coexisted and clashed in the peninsula. Both protagonists were unwilling to go to war over Korea as they struggled to expand their influence and outmaneuver the rival their opponent. This war of friction was to last until 1894-1895. Seoul’s “awakening” through support from Beijing or the West was a “political crime” for Fukuzawa “since Japan was the first state to recognize Korean independence, it had the responsibility to support it and “its enlightenment and civilization”.¹¹⁷ It was Tōkyō’s task to modernize the country; after all, the degree of China’s civilization by western standards was debatable. Many young Korean reformists grew impatient with their reactionary government’s slow-paced modernization programme. They approached the French legation in Tōkyō during the Sino-French war and the Japanese Minister in Seoul, Takezoe Shin’ichirō (1841 or 1842-1917) for assistance. Ignoring Inoue’s calls for caution Takezoe supported the 4 December 1884 coup d’état that briefly succeeded;¹¹⁸ a pro-Japanese government under the reigning king was installed to free Korea from Chinese tyranny.¹¹⁹ The coup, which came to be known as the Gapsin coup, was crushed under the weight of 3,000 Qing and Korean soldiers in the capital two days later. The plotters and the approximately 300 Japanese troops, originally assigned to protect the legation, were defeated and their leaders were arrested or fled to Japan. The legation was burnt, Seoul’s Japanese residents were lynched by the mob and Takezoe, like Hanabusa, was forced to abandon Korea. This incident that caused the clash of Beijing’s and Tōkyō’s forces in Korea was settled through negotiations undertaken by Inoue with Korean and Qing officials. Beijing, especially, was unwilling to risk a war while fighting the French in Tonkin. On 9 January 1885, the treaty of Seoul was signed despite diplomatic complications.¹²⁰ Korea humiliatingly agreed to apologize,

¹¹⁵ Akira Iriye, “Japan’s Drive to Great-Power Status” in *The Cambridge History of Japan, volume 5, Early Modern Japan*, ed. Marius B. Jansen, (New York, Cambridge 1995), pp. 299-300. Before the mission’s return its members met with Emperor Meiji explaining to him the conditions in Korea and their resolution to modernize their country following the example of the Restoration’s. They received 500 rifles and promises for financial aid to free Korea from Beijing’s grip. See Donald Keene, *Emperor of Japan: Meiji and his world, 1852-1912*, (New York 2002), p. 377.

¹¹⁶ Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 52-55.

¹¹⁷ Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire*, p. 169.

¹¹⁸ Takezoe asked his government if he should provide military support to the plotters against the Chinese but the negative response arrived too late to discourage his plans. See Duus, *The Abacus*, p. 57.

¹¹⁹ Iriye, “Japan’s Drive”, p. 302.

¹²⁰ The presence of Qing officials meant that Beijing obviously insisted in regarding Korea as its vassal. The Japanese side demanded the punishment of the Chinese that had attacked Japanese citizens and the withdrawal of Qing forces from Korea. The same demand was presented by the Chinese as

punish the culprits and pay 110,000 yen as compensation to Japanese victims and another 20,000 for the reconstruction of the legation.¹²¹ Tōkyō's responsibility for the incident was overlooked but it was clear that a permanent solution with China had to be found in order to avoid a full-scale war. The outcome of a premature war at that point was unsure. Furthermore, an eventual conflict would complicate the serious efforts for the revision of the treaties undertaken by Minister Inoue. Since Japan had just begun an armaments build up programme, the Meiji leaders chose the road of negotiation.¹²²

Through the mediation of the British diplomat Harry Parkes, the two great statesmen of China and Japan, Li and Itō, the latter one Japan's leading politician after Iwakura's death, met in China in March 1885. On 18 April, they signed the Tianjin Convention or the Li-Itō Convention, as it is better known, containing three points. Each country's military forces had to withdraw, a new Korean army, trained by foreigners (not Chinese or Japanese), would take their place, and lastly it was agreed that if either Japan or China wished to dispatch troops in Korea it had to give prior notice to the other party. The hard-liners and the resolute patriots saw the agreement as Japan's surrender in Korea. Beijing's primacy was not contested and Qing influence reached its apex at the expense of Tōkyō's prestige. A different interpretation suggests that the convention recognized Japan's interests for the first time, albeit to a limited extent.¹²³

In May 1885 Enomoto, Japan's Minister to China wrote to Inoue proposing the transformation of Korea to an Asian Switzerland under the protection of both powers. In November 1885, the new Chinese Minister Resident Yuan Shih-kai (1859-1916) declared that he was in charge of Korea's diplomatic and trade relations. London seemed to endorse Beijing's tributary claims and actions in Korea. The politician George Nathaniel Curzon (1859-1925) both in 1885 and 1893 suggested a Sino-British alliance with the possible entry of Japan to counter the growing Russian influence.¹²⁴ King Gojong approached the Russians to counter the Beijing's growing pressure. The latter, in the summer of 1886, commanded Yuan to depose the king and install the Daewongun in power. This coup failed but Yuan succeeded in banishing the pro-Russian Ministers of the Korean government. Furthermore, the Chinese managed to take control of the shipping lines between the two states and gained a monopoly in the installation of telegraphic lines in Korea. Beijing's fixation was

well. Kabayama and General Takashima Tomonosuke (1844-1916), despite the Navy's lack of readiness, advocated in favour of an immediate war against China. See Banno, "Japanese diplomatic attitudes", pp. 72-73.

¹²¹ Kitaoka, "Inception of a Modern Relationship", pp. 31-32.

¹²² Military spending was amounting to less than 20% of Japan's fiscal budget until 1882. It started exceeding this threshold from 1883 onwards. Ibid., p. 33.

¹²³ Michael A. Barnhart, *Japan and the World since 1868*, (London 1995), pp. 14-15.

¹²⁴ William L. Langer, *La Diplomazia dell'Imperialismo (1890-1902)*, vol. 1, (New York, 1935), pp. 280-281.

linked to its perception of Korea as China's "protective fence", a buffer state to supplement the Qing's national security.¹²⁵

Admittedly, Takezoe obtained the most-favoured-nation clause for Japan with the "Treaty Regulations" agreement signed in July 1883. Nevertheless, Beijing still enjoyed greater trade privileges annulling the benefits of the Kanghwa treaty.¹²⁶ Meiji leaders lamented the lack of modern reforms and the ineffectiveness of the "self-strengthening" movement in Korea, and in a time that tension and reciprocal suspicion were building up in Seoul, they failed to grant military or financial support. Budgetary limitations, naval and army insufficiency and an appeasing foreign policy of avoiding conflict passed the initiative to the opposing side.¹²⁷

Beijing and Tōkyō were not the only suitors for Korea. In 1884 Saint-Petersburg proposed to Seoul the dispatch of military experts to train the insignificant armed forces. Following the report of the *North China Daily News* on the 5th of August 1885, a rumour about a Korea-Russian alliance circulated. Amidst the relentless imperialist struggle between London and Saint-Petersburg in Asia, the former occupied Geomun-do (Hamilton island) from 1885 to 1887 whereas the latter was supposedly planning to obtain Port Lazareff (Wōnsan) from Korea. In the meantime, as result of the Sino-French conflict, Paris concluded the occupation of the Taiwanese Pescadores islands in July 1885. In the summer of 1886 another rumour regarding the transfer of Korea from China to Russia spread panic to the Meiji ruling classes.¹²⁸ "It was obvious", Yamagata wrote in January 1888, "that the existing competition in Asia between Britain and Russia would within a few years cause much trouble in East Asia". He warned the Emperor in 1892 that Japan had to take pre-emptive measures and build up its power before the completion of the Trans-Siberian railroad. For Yamagata, it was Tōkyō's duty to keep Korea free from foreign encroachments. In March 1890 while requesting a larger military budget he claimed: "If we wish to maintain the nation's independence and to rank among the Great Powers, it is necessary to step forward and defend our line of interest, to be always in a favorable position, and not satisfied to defend only the line of sovereignty" And he added, "our line of interest is really in Korea".¹²⁹ Hence traditional Japanese militarism evolved into a modern style imperialistic ambition through the medium of the national security oratory. Yamagata's preoccupation about security in combination with his view of a predatory world transformed Formosa, Korea, Manchuria, China and the rest of the Asian states into objectives necessary for Japan's national interests;

¹²⁵ Minseon Ku, *Bringing "Korea" back into Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895: Qing-Joseon Relations Before and During the Sino-Japanese War*, (Seoul 2015), p. 4.

¹²⁶ Kamikawa, *Japan-American Diplomatic Relations*, p. 118.

¹²⁷ Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 59-60.

¹²⁸ Kamikawa, *Japan-American Diplomatic Relations*, pp. 122-125.

¹²⁹ Japan had to initially defend its line of sovereignty and, then, its line of interest. The first line ran along the frontiers. The second line ran through those neighboring territories which bordered Japan's line of sovereignty. See Marlene Mayo, "Attitudes toward Asia and the beginnings of Japanese empire" in *Imperial Japan and Asia: a reassessment*, ed. G. K. Goodman, (New York 1967), pp. 12-13.

“neither China or Korea is our enemy; it is Britain, France, Russia” he claimed in October 1893. Fukuzawa agreed on the need of military buildup: “When other use violence, we must be violent too”. Japan should not stand idle while the West carved up the Far East but had to “join the chase for the prize”.¹³⁰ Fukuzawa accused Seoul and Beijing on being xenophobic and backward; on 29 July 1894 he described the Sino-Japanese War as a holy war between civilization and barbarity. The scholar Okakura Kakuzō (1862-1913) asserted that Korea, was Japan's "ancient Domain" and it lies within the "lines of legitimate national defense".¹³¹

In a memorandum to the council of state in September 1882, Iwakura claimed that Japan had to increase its naval strength since the Chinese were expanding their fleet. Yamagata too was not content with a conscript army numbering just 40,000 men and his protégé Katsura Tarō in 1886 demanded increased military expenditures so that Tōkyō could “rank with the leading powers”. Besides, only second rate nations were content to merely defend their borders; Japan for Katsura had to arm itself and expand. In 1886 military expenditures rose to 25% of total government expenditures and by 1890 accounted for 31%. The Navy developed its own plans for expanding to 42 vessels that were to be acquired mainly from abroad. With a conflict with China more likely than ever the Army’s General Staff devised plans for an attack on the continent¹³² and organized large scale army and navy maneuvers in the spring of 1890 and fall of 1892. The previous decade’s conciliatory policy towards the feared Qing Empire gave its place to a conviction of victory in the 1890s.¹³³

In April and May of 1894 a group of anti-foreign peasants calling themselves Tonghak revolted in southwestern Korea against the central government which was unable to put the rebellion down. In Seoul, the Japanese chargé d’affaires, Sugimura Fukushima although convinced that the rebellion was not a real threat requested from

¹³⁰ Fukuzawa’s contemporary Sugita Teiichi (1851-1929) commented in 1884 that Japan must contrive to be a “guest at the table” and not “meat” at the banquet. See Ibid., pp. 17-18.

¹³¹ The esteemed historian Hilary Conroy categorized those that supported Tōkyō’s meddling in Korea in three groups, Liberals, Realists and Reactionaries to demonstrate that the entire spectrum of the late 19th century Japan, regardless of political beliefs, unanimously approved the imperialistic aspirations. The first, after the consolidation of parliamentarism domestically, saw Japan as the doctor who would awake and cure a sick Korea. The realists such as Itō and Inoue wished to assist Seoul but only as a means to secure Japan’s safety. Lastly the anti-foreign Pan-Asian activists-terrorists proved more expansionistic than their rival factions as mentioned in the previous chapter. See Hilary Conroy, “Chōsen Mondai”: The Korean Problem in Meiji Japan” in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 100, No. 5 (Oct. 1956), pp. 443-454.

¹³² In 1887 the General Staff drafted an action plan to be used in case of future turmoil in the Far East. An army would launch an invasion in Shanghai whereas a second force had the task of capturing Beijing. Hence an independent Manchuria would be established, Formosa and North China would be annexed and a Japanese protectorate would be imposed upon South China. So, the British Minister to Japan was not far off when he wrote to his Foreign Minister Kimberley (John Wodehouse 1826-1902) on 16 November 1894 that “the conquest and absorption by Japan of the entire Chinese Empire is now freely spoken of”. See W. G. Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism, 1894-1945*, (New York 1987), pp. 46, 57.

¹³³ Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 62-64.

Foreign Minister Mutsu the dispatch of troops on 22 May. The new Minister in Seoul, Ōtori Keisuke (1833-1911) expressed his agreement on the 31st. Fearing Western intervention the rebellion was used as a pretext to apply political pressure and impose the reforms that Tōkyō was promoting for years in Korea.¹³⁴ On 4 June, the information that the Chinese, after Seoul's request the previous day,¹³⁵ were to send 1,500 men was joyfully welcomed by the Japanese legation. Many, Mutsu among them, welcomed the prospect of a war that would act as a safety valve for the bitter political discords. Furthermore, it would rally the nation behind the government.¹³⁶ The Japanese military attaché in Beijing and the consul in Tianjin confirmed the Chinese military preparations.¹³⁷ The following day the 5th division was mobilized and on the 10th, Ōtori marched to Seoul with 300 marines from the Japanese warships stationed at Inchon. He declared to the protesting Koreans that Japan had the right to protect its own citizens according to the 1882 Chemulp'o treaty. Prime Minister Itō obtained imperial sanction for the dispatch of troops at Korea and for the dissolution of the Lower House that criticized the Cabinet's policies.¹³⁸ In mid-June when the Tonghaks agreed to an armistice, the Chinese Minister Resident Yuan and Ōtori

¹³⁴ These reforms included the rationalization of the administration and of the central finances, the introduction of modern legislature, the modernization of the army, the education, of the transportation and communication systems and the elimination of corruption. See *The Abacus*, p. 73.

¹³⁵ Ku, *Bringing "Korea" back*, p. 7.

¹³⁶ Meirion Harries, Susie Harries, *Soldiers of the Sun: The Rise and Fall of the Imperial Japanese Army*, (New York, 1991), p. 55. On 7 July Tateno, Japan's Minister in Washington revealed to his colleagues that due to domestic political dissensions Japan was willing to precipitate a war with China. Secretary of State Walter Gresham (1893-1895) revealed to the Russian Minister on 28 July "that because of the menacing internal complications in Japan, the Government in order to divert attention will be ready for everything" meaning the impending war. See Payson J. Treat, "The Cause of the Sino-Japanese War, 1894" in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Jun., 1939), pp. 150-153.

¹³⁷ Beijing respected the Tianjin Convention and on 7 June officially notified the Japanese government of its intention to send troops to suppress the rebels. In the same evening Mutsu informed the Chinese of the dispatch of Japanese forces. See Munemitsu Mutsu, *Kenkenroku: A Diplomatic Record of the Sino-Japanese War, 1894-5*, (Tokyo 1982), pp. 13-15.

¹³⁸ These first 4 years of parliamentary life in Japan were turbulent. Following a disagreement on military expenditures the government obtained an imperial decree to dissolve the diet in December 1891. The elections held in February 1892 were characterized by corruption and violence and were won by the opposition. The third imperial diet lasted only from May to June 1892 when Prime Minister Matsukata submitted his resignation. In August, Itō took over but the diet still criticized the government's plan for naval expansion. On 19 February 1893, the Emperor intervened ordering the deduction of 1/10 of the politicians' and public servants' stipends for the armaments buildup. During the fifth session in November-December 1893 the opposition attacked Itō for his management of the unequal treaties's revision and Ōkuma Shigenobu accused the government of corruption; the diet was again dissolved. New elections took place in March 1894. The new parliament lasted from 15 May until early June. See Edwin O. Reischauer, *Storia del Giappone: Dalle origini ai giorni nostri*, (Bologna 1961), p. 322 and George B. Sansom, *The Western World And Japan A Study In The Interaction Of European And Asiatic Cultures*, (London 1960), pp. 520-521. Because of this situation, Li and Yuan were convinced that Tōkyō was bluffing and was unable to engage in a continental war in the midst of internal instability. Edmund S. K. Fung, "Ch'ing Policy in the Sino-Japanese War" in *Journal of Asian History*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (1973), p. 131.

negotiated the reduction of their forces in line with Seoul's request.¹³⁹ However, by the end of June Tōkyō had already poured in Korea 7 to 8,000 men between Seoul and Inchon;¹⁴⁰ a withdrawal without something to show for, such as Korea's modernization, was out of the question due to the widespread warlike sentiment¹⁴¹ and the ruling classes' ambitions.¹⁴² The Japanese merchants trading primarily in cotton textiles in Korea were another pressure group that desired the country's modernization along Japan's paradigm.¹⁴³ The Army had to stay for the time being as a counterweight to Qing pressure. The Meiji and Qing detachments glared its other menacingly in the absence of an actual foe.

¹³⁹ They reached an agreement to withdraw their forces on the 15th but Ōtori never signed it. See Ku, *Bringing "Korea" back*, p. 9.

¹⁴⁰ General Kawakami Sōroku urged Mutsu to dispatch troops taking advantage of the opportunity even though the rebellion was already quelled. The general believed that a force of 7,000 men would suffice but Mutsu argued that the cautious Itō would not give his consent for such a force. As a result they collaborated to trick the Prime Minister. While they extracted Itō's approval for the dispatch of a brigade, typically numbering 2,000 men, they actually sent to Korea a mixed brigade of 7-8,000 troops under Major General Ōshima Yoshimasa (1850-1926). See Harries, Harries, *Soldiers of the Sun*, p. 55.

¹⁴¹ Tensions were high because of the Korean ban on exports of soy beans and rice to Japan in September 1889 and in the autumn of 1893 respectively. In both cases the Japanese merchants backed up by their consular authorities heatedly demanded reparations for their losses. Even more important than the constant Sino-Korean affronts for the Japanese was the case of the revolutionary Kim Ok-gyun's (1851-1894) murder in March 1894. A pro-Japanese reformist during the 1884 coup and a political refugee in Japan since then, he enjoyed the sympathy of prominent Pan-Asian and "Help Korea" proponents. His murder in Shanghai, and the subsequent dismemberment and public display of the remains in Korea to discourage further revolutionaries infuriated those in Japan that, regardless of their political standing, believed that Korea had to be freed by the pro-Chinese oppressive and barbarian regime. On 31 May 1894, the House of Representatives voted 153 to 139 to present to the Emperor a memorandum that criticized the government for its passivity before Beijing's provocations. See Kyu Hyun Kim, "The Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895): Japanese National Integration and Construction of the Korean 'Other'" in *International Journal of Korean History*, Vol.17 No.1, (Feb. 2012), p. 8.

See Kamikawa, *Japan-American Diplomatic Relations*, pp. 156-157.

¹⁴² Matsukata Masayoshi, who was usually critical of Japanese interventions in Korea, in this case proposed to Kuroda in mid-June 1894 the utilization of the already deployed forces to extract "real rights and interests" meaning railway and mining rights from Seoul. See Duus, *The Abacus*, p. 70. In January 1895, President of the House of Peers Konoe pointed out that victory at war must be followed by Japan's domination of the shipping lines in the Pacific and the Chinese Sea so that Tōkyō became "the maritime king of the East". Meiji leaders had to take advantage of the trade nodes that would develop around Japan after the construction of the Trans-Siberian railroad and the Panama Canal. See Zachmann, *China and Japan*, p. 42.

¹⁴³ It was the prospect of profit and not actual revenue that convinced the merchants of Korea's economic value. For example in 1893, besides the increased volume of trade transactions, Japanese exports in Korea were valued at just 1.7 million yen. Akira Iriye suggested that Japan's immature finance capitalism of the mid-1890s should be treated as one ingredient and not as the most predominant factor behind Tōkyō's imperialistic policies. For Conroy "economic matters had no important effect in determining the Japanese course toward the annexation of Korea" and "the causes of the Sino-Japanese war were not economic...". See Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism*, p. 45.

On 14 June Itō presented to the Cabinet a list of reforms to be imposed upon Seoul. The next day Mutsu declared that if Beijing appeared unwilling to join forces, Japan would implement the reforms unilaterally. On the 16th the Qing government, through the Minister to Japan, Wang Fengzao refused to jointly suppress the rebels or reform Korea. Ten days later Ōtori submitted his reform proposal to King Gojong. The latter ignored it, demanding instead the withdrawal of the Japanese forces from his country. Following the advice of many Japanese officials, back home and in Seoul, Ōtori decided to occupy Seoul and impose a protectorate.¹⁴⁴ Unlike the previous coups this time the Japanese forces were strategically positioned and ready to control the capital upon Tōkyō's command;¹⁴⁵ the latter had to allay the powers' suspicions. On 25 June Mikhail Khitrovo (1837-1896), the Russian Minister in Tōkyō met with Mutsu and called for the withdrawal of Japan's forces and the maintenance of peace. The Japanese Foreign Minister responded that his government wished only to reform Korea with or without China. Khitrovo stiffened his position on the 30th: Japan had to recall its troops or "bear serious responsibility for the consequences".¹⁴⁶ In the same time the British Minister in China, Nicholas Roderick O'Connor (1843-1908) mediated between the Tzongli Yamen and Komura, Japan's Minister in Beijing in the hope of reaching a peace settlement. London was concerned about the disruption of trade in the Far East and seemed to foresee a Chinese victory. The Deputy Minister to Tōkyō, Ralph Spencer Paget (1864-1940) met Mutsu on 23 July and gained his commitment that if war finally broke out, both belligerents would avoid operations around Shanghai,¹⁴⁷ the focal point of the British sphere of influence in China.¹⁴⁸ A day earlier, Japan's Minister in Berlin, Aoki Shūzō (1844-1914) had reported that London was proposing the division of Korea between Beijing and Tōkyō to avoid the conflict. On 9 July, the American Minister called Mutsu to respect Korea's independence, whereas the French François Jules Harmand (1845-1921) asserted that peace in the future was feasible through a French-Japanese alliance. Li

¹⁴⁴ The imposition of a protectorate "for many future years or even forever" was the general line adopted among other options by the cabinet on 17 August. The two other options presented also by Mutsu were Korea's independence, a very precarious scenario due to the country's vulnerability, and the extraction of a declaration from the interested powers guaranteeing Korea's integrity. See Duus, *The Abacus*, p. 80.

¹⁴⁵ Kamikawa, *Japan-American Diplomatic Relations*, pp. 157-158.

¹⁴⁶ Mutsu's answer to this threat on 2 July was that he appreciated the friendly Russian advice but the Tonghak rebellion was not completely suppressed yet. See Mutsu, *Kenkenroku*, pp. 40-43.

¹⁴⁷ China however, used the area for military purposes. In August, Japanese authorities made clear to O'Connor that if the current situation persisted Tōkyō could not guarantee Shanghai's safety. Thus the British Minister extracted a demilitarization declaration from Beijing as well. See Aleš Skřivan, Sr. and Aleš Skřivan, Jr., "Great Powers and the Sino-Japanese War 1894-1895" in *Prague Papers on the History of International Relations*, Vol. 2 (2015), p. 23.

¹⁴⁸ Paget on 21 July warned Mutsu that if Tōkyō did not accept mediation as Beijing had requested or an international conference to solve the problem then "only Japan will be responsible". Mutsu in protest claimed that it was China that had refused the Japanese proposal to collaborate and that Tōkyō's sole preoccupation was to secure the privileges that Beijing already enjoyed. After the declaration of war, London and Washington offered their good offices to end the conflict in October and November 1894 respectively. See Kamikawa, *Japan-American Diplomatic Relations*, pp. 161-164.

Hongzang in the same time approached the Western Powers, especially Britain and Russia that had extensive interests in the Far East, for mediation. The diplomatic battle for international sympathy continued. To make Japan appear as the defender of civilization and not the aggressor in the upcoming war,¹⁴⁹ Mutsu authorized Aoki in late July-early August to bribe the Reuters news agency to circulate pro-Japanese articles.¹⁵⁰

On 16 July 1894, Britain's extraterritoriality, rights in Japan were finally annulled by a new more "equal" trade treaty (although tariff privileges were retained). On 22 November, a similar treaty was signed in Washington although it was not ratified until February 1895 due to American concerns over the rumours of Japanese atrocities in China.¹⁵¹ The show of force during the war and not modern institutions and legislature symbolized Tōkyō's growing status and proved to be the key to achieving nominal parity with the West. In Japan, publicists, politicians and citizens desired more than shaking Chinese influence off Seoul: extending Japanese influence in Asia and acquiring a beachhead for future domination if not the outright establishment of an empire in the continent that would serve as an outlet for the nation's rapidly increasing population. The government was politically and militarily up to the task and backed up by public opinion pursued an expansionist policy, signifying international recognition and the status and prestige of a Great Power.¹⁵² Japan was now a global power and not a semi-colonized nation, as the Buddhist missionary¹⁵³ Nakanishi Ushirō (1859-1930) had envisioned in his 1 January 1895

¹⁴⁹ Japan was winning the media war. Through pictorials on bilingual newspapers, paintings and woodblock prints even before the war had started, Tōkyō managed to project itself as a civilized, westernized nation to the world. It also reassured its domestic audience of Japan's righteous aims, exalted patriotism and drew widespread support for the war. Japan's victorious armies were often depicted with western features whereas the coward Qings as monkeys or pigs. Prints of Korea's conquerors Hideyoshi and Jingū were also popular. See Marco Del Bene, "Propaganda e Rappresentazione dell'Altro nel Giappone Prebellico: Cina e occidente tra manga e nishikie" in *Le Guerre Mondiali in Asia Orientale e in Europa: Violenza, Collaborazionismi, Propaganda*, ed. B. Bianchi, L. De Giorgi, G. Samarini, (Milan 2009), pp. 89-103 and Judith Fröhlich, "Pictures of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895" in *War in History*, Vol. 21, No 2 (2014), pp. 214-250.

¹⁵⁰ Keene, *Emperor of Japan*, p. 493

¹⁵¹ Mutsu, *Kenkenroku*, pp. 56-76.

¹⁵² However, Tōkyō's siding with the West against China did not mean an outright admission of the Asian island country to the elite club of the civilized and powerful states. Concerns about the Yellow Peril were still not dispersed; they were intensified after Japan's emergence as a potentially powerful foe. Chinese resources under Japanese guidance appeared as an ominous scenario for some Western politicians. The expert historian Masao Murayama recognizes a clear case of "transfer psychology" in the West's psychological pressure (subjugation threat, disdain) towards Meiji Japan. This pressure in combination with oppressive policies domestically made the common people more racist and proponents of a tougher foreign policy towards weaker counties. See Richard Storry, *The Making of the Twentieth Century Japan and the Decline of the West in Asia, 1894-1943*, (London 1979), pp. 19-20.

¹⁵³ Japanese Buddhists of various sects undertook their own paternalistic "civilizing mission" to reform the less sophisticated and corrupt Korean Buddhism. The first sect to establish its base in Pusan was the Higashi Hongan-ji in 1877, followed by the Nichiren in 1881, and the Nishi Hogan-ji in 1895. During the Sino-Japanese war they served Tōkyō's imperialistic agenda by performing rituals, distributing

editorial, one that had the task to defeat the strong and the violent and help the weak and the feeble of the world. As Tokutomi Sohō commented two days before the opening of hostilities “I do not advocate war just for the sake of it. I am not advocating plundering of other lands. But I insist on war with China in order to transform Japan, hitherto a contracting nation, into an expansive nation”.¹⁵⁴

Ōtori, instructed by Mutsu on 11 July, to provoke China with his demands, did everything in his power to incite a war. His plan in collaboration with Ōshima was to capture the palace and oust the reactionary Min faction. The coup was to be presented as it was staged by Regent Daewongun and the Japanese intervention as a response to his call for help against the pro-Min troops. The pretext was Seoul’s unsatisfactory response on 19 July to Ōtori’s demand to expel the Qing forces. On the morning of 23 July, the palace was seized and the reluctant Daewongun was forced to act as the head of a new pro-Japanese government. The previous Sino-Korean agreements were annulled. On the 27th a new Deliberative Council was established to implement the reforms that Tōkyō dictated.¹⁵⁵ In the meanwhile and without a formal declaration of war two battles took place on land and at sea. On 25 July patrolling units of the Japanese navy exchanged fire with units of the Qing Beiyang Fleet that was transporting troops to Korea’s west coast. The naval battle of Pungdo or Feng-tao ended in a definite Japanese victory. However, the sinking of the transport ship *Kowshing* caused a diplomatic incident between London and Tōkyō.¹⁵⁶ Leased by

talismans and pamphlets and gathering donations. The most important “western style” missionary that crossed the Tsushima Strait to enlighten Korea, the land “still shallow in knowledge”, between 1894 and 1901 was Katō Bunkyō. For him Japan was the “center of world Buddhism” and Japan religiously, as much as politically, had the mission to “civilize”, reform and protect the faithful. Among other activities, Katō expanded Japanese secular and “moral” influence in the peninsula by building educational facilities and temples with Tōkyō’s aid. Similarly the Buddhist priest Okamura Enshin (1843-1913) settled in the remote village of Kwangju to create a “Japanese village” or a “paradise village”. Okamura enjoying the financial support of Konoe Atsumaro, an Asianist, erected a school and taught modern agricultural techniques and the Japanese language to local farmers. See Micah L. Auerback, *Japanese Buddhism in an age of empire: Mission and reform in colonial Korea, 1877-1931*, Ph.D. Dissertation (Princeton 2007), pp. 121-156 and Nam-Lin Hur, “The Sōtō Sect and Japanese Military Imperialism in Korea” in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 1/2 (Spring, 1999), pp. 107-134.

¹⁵⁴ Iriye, “Japan’s Drive”, pp. 321-313.

¹⁵⁵ Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 76-77.

¹⁵⁶ After *Kowshing* went down, Japanese cruisers rescued only the British members of the crew. An official apology was delivered immediately to London. There was also the matter of the legitimacy of the Japanese actions. On 3 August, the Foreign Office held Tōkyō responsible for the loss of British property and the ship’s owners demanded compensation. After an investigation by experts and jurists the action was adjudicated to be in conformity with International Law and London eventually dropped the charges. The outcome was certainly affected by Aoki’s efforts to influence the western public opinion and the Japanese-British rapprochement after the signing of the new trade treaty. Besides it was Japan and not China that could act as an ally against Russian expansion as the 1902 Japanese-British alliance reveals. Nevertheless, London hypocritically did receive compensation for the *Kowshing* incident from Beijing in April 1896 and March 1903. Apparently, China’s “belligerent behaviour” was ruled responsible for the loss of approximately 1,000 Chinese lives. See Douglas

Beijing to land troops in Asan (Seonghwan), the vessel flew the Union Jack in time of peace. Subsequently the Qing forces in Asan did not receive reinforcements and in the following battle of 28-29 July they were routed by Ōshima's 4,000 men. The survivors fled north to Pyongyang leaving the capital and southern Korea in Japanese hands and the northern half to the Chinese. War was formally declared on 1 August 1894.¹⁵⁷

In Seoul, by late August Ōtori had implemented numerous modern laws and extracted more economic benefits paving the way for an actual protectorate. In exchange Tōkyō guaranteed Korea's "independence" against the Tonghaks and the Chinese; on the 26th a mutual defensive and offensive military alliance valid for the duration of the war was signed. Two days later, King Gojong declared Korea's independence and promulgated several reforms such as religious freedom, abolition of slavery and the establishment of a diplomatic service. An action that he would repeat on 12 December. On 25 October 1894, Inoue Kaoru arrived in Seoul as adviser to the king in place of the ousted conservatives, the Mins, and make sure that the much-needed reforms were proceeding. In Japan there was frustration with the slowness of reforms in Korea. Fukuzawa lamented the need to work with the Daewongun, and decried Tōkyō's wasting of money and blood for a backward and stubborn "barbarian country".¹⁵⁸

While the outcome of the conflict was still undetermined, the Daewongun and the King dispatched letters asking Beijing for help in August despite the signing of the military alliance with Japan. This was perceived as a treasonous act by the Japanese. As a result, Inoue backed up by Tōkyō's expeditionary forces removed the regent and installed a reformist pro-Japanese government. Furthermore, Inoue pressed for a loan to the puppet regime in return for a naval base, the monopoly on telegraphic lines and the construction of a Seoul-Pusan-Inchon railway¹⁵⁹ among other demands, in a typical example of economic sub-imperialism. As he boldly told Itō on 24 December 1894, he was implementing the Egyptian policy of the British in Seoul. The best tool to maintain a long-lasting influence, even after the war's termination, was economic subjugation. During December and January, he pressed his government for a 5 million

Howland, "The Sinking of the S. S. Kowshing: International Law, Diplomacy, and the Sino-Japanese War" in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (Jul., 2008), pp. 673-703.

¹⁵⁷ The Chinese declaration of war accused the "wojen" (pigmies) for breaking the laws and interfering in Korea, whereas according to Emperor Matsuhito the state had been "our tributary for the last two hundred odd years". See Turnbull White, *The war in the East; Japan, China and Corea: A complete history of the War, its causes and results, its campaigns on sea and land, its terrific fights, grand victories and overwhelming defeats*, (Philadelphia 1895), pp. 449-450.

¹⁵⁸ Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 81-83.

¹⁵⁹ Yamagata was a great supporter of a railway from Pusan to Manchuria reaching as far as India. It would enable Japan to dominate the East militarily and economically. The railway and other economic monopolies enjoyed by Japan provoked the Ministers of Russia, Britain, the US and Germany at Seoul to lodge jointly an official protest. See Peter Duus. "Economic Dimensions of Meiji Imperialism: The case of Korea, 1895-1910" in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*, ed. R. H. Myers, M. R. Peattie, (New Jersey, 1984) p. 139.

yen loan secured against revenue stemming from Korea's southern provinces, which were under Japanese supervision. Itō and the financiers in Tōkyō appeared reluctant. Inoue turned to the Korean branches of the Japanese Dai-Ichi Bank (Inchon, Pusan¹⁶⁰ and Seoul) to secure the loan.¹⁶¹ By spring 1895, 40 Japanese advisers, instructors, Ministers and secretaries were employed by the new submissive government.¹⁶²

The Qing army numbered more than a million soldiers but just 10% were equipped with modern arms and trained along modern western standards. The navy was composed of semi-modern vessels. The absence of unified command and the fragmentation of forces in ethnic groups guaranteed the Chinese military's inadequacy. On the other hand, Tōkyō mobilized 100,000 men in the initial phases of the war (5 divisions and 2 in reserve), possessed more modern warships and it had instituted a General Staff for both the army and the navy. The First Army's task under Yamagata was to secure Korea and attack Manchuria. The Second Army under the command of the War Minister, General Ōyama Iwao (1842-1916) was also to attack Manchuria, capture Port Arthur, rendezvous with the First Army and threaten Beijing. On the battlefield the demoralized Chinese troops retreated to Pyongyang where they fortified themselves. In mid-September 1894, the Imperial Japanese Army surrounded the city from several directions. The Chinese forces had 2,000 dead and 4,000 wounded and retreated in haste beyond the Yalu River, the physical border between Korea and Manchuria abandoning large part of their equipment. The victorious Japanese suffered 102 dead and 433 wounded. On 17 September, the greatest naval battle of the war up to that point took place at the mouth of the Yalu River. The Japanese Combined Fleet intercepted the Beiyang Squadron while attempting to bring reinforcements to the Qing fighting troops. After hours of mutual shelling 4 Chinese cruisers were destroyed with a loss of 600 sailors in contrast to Japan's 239 dead. 5 Chinese transport ships were also captured a fact that ensured Japan's naval superiority for the rest of the war and Beijing's inability to supply efficiently and speedily its hard-pressed troops in Manchuria.¹⁶³

In southern Korea, 20,000 participated in a riot against the Japanese occupation forces in early October, the season's bad harvest aggravating their grievances. At the same time, other revolts took place in Kiung-sang, Jeho and in the country's mountainous regions initiating a guerilla resistance movement. Surprisingly for Tōkyō, the occupation army and the "enlightenment" that it brought with it was not welcomed by the entire local population. The Japanese army responded with harsh reprisals involving arrests and executions.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ The first store was erected in Pusan in 1878 thanks to a governmental subsidy of 100,000 yen. See Ibid., p. 154.

¹⁶¹ The loan of ultimately 3 million was concluded on March 30 1895 by the Bank of Japan. See Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism*, pp. 51-52.

¹⁶² Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 92-93.

¹⁶³ Skřivan and Skřivan, "Great Powers", pp. 18-22.

¹⁶⁴ Stewart Lone, *Army, Empire and Politics in Meiji Japan*, (New York 2000), p. 34.

The continuous Chinese defeats on the battlefield had compelled Beijing to ask for the mediation of the powers for a ceasefire as early as November 1894.¹⁶⁵ On 6 October, British Prime Minister Rosebery (Archibald Philip Primrose 1847-1929) fearing China's collapse attempted to summon an international peace conference on the premise of Korean independence and war reparations for Japan. Berlin found the move premature, Paris discreetly supported it, whereas the Russian foreign policy was for the time inactive due to the Czar's impending death.¹⁶⁶ The Italian Foreign Minister Alberto Blanc was the only one to openly express agreement.¹⁶⁷ In order to disperse the prospect of an anti-Japanese front, Mutsu met with Khitrovo and assured him that Japan would respect western interests in Korea. Russian Foreign Minister Nicholas de Giers (1820-1895) expressed his sympathy to London's initiative but ultimately on 24 October Russia refused to intervene. The eventuality of a British-Russian approach and of a subsequent expansion in the Far East propelled the ambitious German Kaiser to propose to Chancellor Hohenlohe on 11 November 1894 the seizure of Formosa or of another naval base. Hohenlohe after conferring with his advisors responded that Formosa had unfavourable natural conditions, a hostile population and its development would require huge administrative costs.¹⁶⁸

The outcome of the war was already determined, much to the surprise of foreign observers,¹⁶⁹ but Tōkyō pressed on to gain more benefits at the negotiations table. The diet, relocated to the war capital Hiroshima, voted unanimously for an enlarged war budget of 150,000 million yen during the 18 and 22 October session twice over the state's annual revenues.¹⁷⁰ The Japanese General Staff set as its next objectives the strategically important ports of Port Arthur and Weihaiwei. On 24 October, the Japanese crossed the Yalu River and entered Manchuria. The following day they captured the deserted city Jiulianzheng after another Chinese retreat to the North. The advancing First Army divided its forces: The Fifth division under General Nozu Michitsura (1840-1908) moved towards Mukden whereas the Third under Katsura, pursued the fleeing Chinese and headed for the Liaodong peninsula. To administer the occupied territories in Manchuria the army established a civilian affairs office on 1 November 1894 in Andong under Komura Jutarō. In a letter to the local authorities Yamagata justified this action by claiming that such a measure was necessary in order to ensure the population's safety and property. A second office opened later in Liaodong under another diplomat. However, military officers would

¹⁶⁵ On 26 November Li dispatched the German Gustav Detring (1842-1913) to Hiroshima to negotiate the terms upon which Japan would agree to cease hostilities. Itō refused to meet with him since Detring did not carry any official authorization. See Skřivan and Skřivan, "Great Powers", p. 29.

¹⁶⁶ Fung, "Ch'ing Policy", p. 140.

¹⁶⁷ The Japanese Minister to Rome, Takahira Kogorō (1854-1926) reported to Mutsu on 10 October and 11 November that the Italian views were identical to the British and that Rome "wishes to act in concert with Britain". See Mutsu, *Kenkenroku*, pp. 133-134.

¹⁶⁸ Langer, *La Diplomazia*, pp. 282-292.

¹⁶⁹ Fung, "Ch'ing Policy", p. 137.

¹⁷⁰ Walter Wallace McLaren, *Political History during the Meiji Era, 1867- 1912*, (New York 1912), p. 227.

take charge of these offices on a later date. Komura was replaced by Colonel Fukushima Yasumasa (1852-1919) on 9 December. The army had found Komura's plea to respect the Chinese non-combatants offensive, since it was not his place as a civilian to make such a request. The traditional conviction of military superiority and the continuous victories exacerbated the already deep-rooted disdain that the Army nurtured for the decadent Chinese and even its own civilians. A measure that increased Japanese popularity was Yamagata's decision to renounce that year's taxes. Collaboration with local Qing officials made coexistence more bearable and secured the invading army's supply lines.¹⁷¹ This brief administration of the occupied areas provided the Meiji with their first experience in controlling overseas colonial territories. Weihaiwei was the target of the Second Army which on the 6th and 7th November occupied Jinzhou and Dalian with minimum losses. In the same time a third army was being assembled in Nagasaki ready to embark and land in Dagu in close proximity to Beijing.¹⁷² On 20 November the siege of Port Arthur commenced, China's most modern, well equipped and heavily garrisoned fort. The Beiyang fleet was nowhere to be seen and the Qing commanders fled the besieged port abandoning their men to their gruesome fate. The taking of the "impregnable" fort took less than a day for Ōyama's men.

During this period, the press reported an alternative reality. Foreign reporters had been exalting the Japanese soldiers' courage, efficiency and discipline.¹⁷³ News reports of the patriotic *Tōkyō Nichi Nichi* and *Jiyū shinbun* newspapers frequently highlighted the efficiency of Red Cross military hospitals and the supposedly heroic and chivalry behaviour towards the vanquished Chinese.¹⁷⁴ The truth however, was quite different. Many foreign reporters were bribed and thus unreliable, whereas Japanese press was censored during the war.¹⁷⁵ In reality the Imperial Army suffered from lack of guides, supplies, winter uniforms and most of all discipline: incidents of gambling, disobedience and desertion had been recorded. The biggest incident of insubordination, the Port Arthur massacre, unfolded from 21 to 25 November 1894.¹⁷⁶ The reporter Cowan of the *London Times*, an eye witness, described the events after the fall of the fort as an "horrifying scene" and an "awful epidemic of "incredible

¹⁷¹ Lone, *Army, Empire*, pp. 34-35.

¹⁷² Itō was opposing the plans of his political rival Yamagata for the capture of the Chinese capital and discharged him supposedly due to his poor health. The fall of Beijing meant the fall of the Qing dynasty, the intervention of the powers and chaos. The Prime Minister wanted a quick, decisive victory before any of the Powers could interfere. The port of Weihaiwei, the target set by the navy, presented a more appropriate objective for Itō. On 4 December, he obtained an imperial approval for a joint army-navy expedition against Weihaiwei; Beijing was not to be seized. See Skřivan and Skřivan, "Great Powers", p. 30.

¹⁷³ Mutsu, *Kenkenroku*, pp. 106-197.

¹⁷⁴ Kim, "The Sino-Japanese War", p. 11.

¹⁷⁵ "Reports should record insofar as possible true facts concerning acts of loyalty, courage, righteousness, and nobility and should encourage feelings of hostility toward the enemy". Those who violated these regulations would be suitably punished. See Keene, *Emperor of Japan*, p. 493.

¹⁷⁶ Lone, *Army, Empire*, pp. 30-31.

brutality". Japanese cavalry was "slaughtering all within range" and "I saw the Japanese march in, firing up the streets and into the houses chasing and killing every live thing that crossed their path...I saw scores of Chinese hunted out of cover, shot down, and hacked to pieces, and never a man made any attempt to fight".¹⁷⁷ At a time when Tōkyō was seeking to be "admitted as an equal into the family of civilized nations", Cowan concluded that Japan was only pretending to be humane, and now stood "disgraced upon the world" and driven by "a new lust for dominion" that "have set her mad". General Ōyama's staff investigated the incident and arrested a few culprits. The reporter's damning account could not be more damaging to Japan's 40-year effort to be recognized as a modern, civilized nation: "...that Japan has been arraying herself in the outward garb of civilization, without having gone through the process of moral and intellectual development necessary to grasp the ideas upon which modern civilization is founded; that Japan at heart is a barbarous nation, not yet to be trusted with sovereign power over the lives and property of civilized men".¹⁷⁸ While estimates of the total number of victims still vary from 3,000 to 20,000 the massacre is undeniably one of the darkest pages in Japan's modern history. As the reporter of the *New York World*, James Creelman put it: "It was the first stain upon Japanese civilization. The Japanese in this instance *relapsed* into barbarism. All pretenses that circumstances justified the atrocities are false".¹⁷⁹

Despite Chinese attempts to halt the Japanese advance in Manchuria, Haicheng was occupied on 13 December 1894 and the First and Second Armies jointly defeated the enemy remains at Ganwangzhai 6 days later. On 10 January 1895 the strategically important city of Gaiping also fell. In December 1894 Beijing authorized the diplomat Zhang Yinhuan (1837-1900) and Shao Youlian, former chargé d'affaires in Saint Petersburg and Governor of Formosa, to open negotiations in Hiroshima. According to some, Prime Minister Itō, in an effort to humiliate China, refused to accept their credentials on 1 February and they left Japan three days later. Entrusting this important task to less important men like Zhang and Shao implied that China had not "acknowledged her defeat" and did not sincerely desired to "terminate hostilities".¹⁸⁰ On 23 January 1895 General Ōyama landed his forces in Shandong and on 12 February Weihaiwei was seized. The road to Beijing was open. The supposedly

¹⁷⁷ The following days "were spent by the soldiery in murder and pillage from dawn to dark, in mutilation, in every conceivable kind of nameless atrocity... I saw corpses of women and children...". Cowan continued: "bodies of men strewed the streets in hundreds, perhaps thousands.... disemboweled and dismembered, with occasionally a dagger or bayonet thrust in private parts". Cowan discredited the Japanese excuses that the city's populace was armed and attacked the marching army barricaded in buildings. He admitted that Japanese soldiers on their way to Port Arthur had discovered mutilated bodies of their comrades. Enraged they "swore revenge, and they carried out their vow thoroughly in barbarous eastern style. All that can be said is that the Chinese committed nameless atrocities which the Japanese repaid a hundred fold". The torpedo boats off the port sunk ships filled with civilians trying to escape the earthly inferno. Even the presence of foreign reporters and diplomats in the city was unable to "check the carnival of murder". He added: "I saw hundreds killed after being captured and tied". See White, *The war in the East*, pp. 599-600.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 601-605.

¹⁷⁹ Keene, *Emperor of Japan*, p. 493.

¹⁸⁰ Mutsu, *Kenkenroku*, pp. 152-153

liberal politician Ozaki proposed the seizure of China's coastal provinces in case the Qing collapsed.¹⁸¹ Russian and British diplomats in Saint-Petersburg decided to act. On 3 February, they asked Tōkyō to dictate its peace terms to China. The new Russian Foreign Minister Lobanov (Alexey Borisovich Lobanov-Rostovsky 1824-1896) initially did not appear hostile to territorial gains or even a Japanese protectorate in China. The Kaiser on 6 March however, advised Japan to show restraint and moderation during the peace negotiations. Li, desperate to save the empire, approached O'Connor on 24 February offering an alliance. He asked for London's intervention and offered as a counterweight control of the country's administration, railways, army, and mines. London however, was content with the expansion of foreign economic privileges in China, which the Japanese peace treaty would guarantee for every power.¹⁸² On 8 January 1895 the British Minister in Japan (1895-1900), Ernest Mason Satow (1843-1929) espoused Itō convictions that Korean independence was "quite impractical" and it should "be either annexed, or be placed under the protection of some other Power". Satow added that the solution of an independent Korea had great disadvantages "as Russia would then be able to deal with Korea directly".¹⁸³ The London-Tōkyō understanding against the common enemy was taking form rapidly.

On 19 March 1895, Li Hongzhang arrived at Shimonoseki to meet Itō once again 10 years after their previous meeting in Tianjin. He suggested an Asian alliance against the Western aggression and an immediate ceasefire, an unrealistic demand since on 23 March 1895 Japanese forces landed at Pescadores and two days later at Taiwan. At the same time Japanese troops were advancing towards Beijing. Thus, on 21 March Itō, to suspend hostilities, demanded control of the forts and the surrender of all arms and military supplies in the regions of Dagu, Tianjin and Shanhaiguan along with monetary compensation and railway concessions. Viceroy Li rejected the plan as its establishment in these strategic locations would essentially enable Japan to threaten Beijing at will. The war continued until the 27 March ceasefire declared by Emperor Meiji due to an assassination attempt against Li by a fanatic two days earlier. Japan's demands according to the terms set on 1 April 1895 were: recognition of Korea's full independence, annexation of Formosa¹⁸⁴ and territories in Manchuria including Port Arthur, reparations of 300 million taels, control of Weihaiwei until the

¹⁸¹ Lone, *Army, Empire*, p. 39.

¹⁸² Fung, "Ch'ing Policy", pp. 147-148.

¹⁸³ George Alexander Lensen, *Korea and Manchuria between Russia and Japan, 1895-1904: The observations of Sir Ernest Satow British Plenipotentiary to Japan (1895-1900) and China (1900-1906)*, (Tokyo 1966), pp. 24-25.

¹⁸⁴ Formosa was inserted in the peace treaty draft following Mutsu's suggestion on 8 October 1894. Its occupation was supplementary to the demand for a Chinese indemnity or as a counterproposal should Beijing refuse to give up Liaodong. According to memorandum sent on 1 December by the Japanese Minister to Russia, Nishi Tokujirō's (1847-1912) every territorial gain would provoke Western reaction. In this respect Formosa, backward and less desirable by the powers, was perhaps the lesser evil. In addition, seizure of Taiwan was to appease the expansionists and the navy officers that desired to strengthen Japan's position in the South Seas. See Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism*, p. 56-58.

final payment of the indemnity, the most favoured nation status, a new trade treaty, the opening of a further seven ports and other economic privileges to be shared by all treaty signatories. The last provision was a tactical move to gain the sympathy and recognition of the powers in anticipation of their eventual hostility to Japanese continental aggrandizement.¹⁸⁵ For the same purpose on 25 May 1895 the cabinet, to reassure western concerns, published in English its resolution to respect the powers' treaty rights. Recovered from his injuries, Li had 4 days to respond. On 5 April, he raised objections to every single Japanese claim¹⁸⁶ and commented that the commercial provisions were "unreasonable... and derogatory to the sovereignty of an independent nation". After the expiration of the ceasefire on 8 April hostilities commenced yet again. Upon hearing the harsh terms Lobanov, now opposed to the idea of a Japanese held Port Arthur that would jeopardize Chinese sovereignty, proposed an intervention to London;¹⁸⁷ on 8 April the British government decided that its interests were not threatened by such an arrangement. Two days later, Itō presented to Li the revised and more lenient terms for peace which included the concession of Pescadores, Taiwan and Liaodong, the opening of 4 ports and reparations of 200 million yen.¹⁸⁸ Liaodong was returned to China in May under foreign pressure as we

¹⁸⁵ For the Japanese history expert Asada Kyōji, the war was a way for Tōkyō to prove its modernity and gain parity and respect by impressing the West. This is how he explains the fact that Japan settled for such small rewards after fighting a major conflict that cost 18,000 deaths (officially 13,300, 1,418 deaths in action and 11,894 by disease) and 5,000 wounded. See Lone, *Army, Empire*, p. 40.

¹⁸⁶ On 9 April, he submitted his counterproposal: joint recognition of Korea's independence, Japanese annexation of the Pescadores, a smaller territory in Manchuria, an indemnity of 100 million taels and a reciprocal most favoured nation clause. Li argued that extensive land concessions would provoke the Chinese people's "hostility" preventing any future cooperation between the two nations. During the talks, Itō in order to mollify Li's protests on Taiwan stated that "we may have to spend on the lands more than we can reap from them". The following dialogue is enlightening; Li: "You will find Taiwan difficult to take. France tried but failed. The coast is stormy and the people are defiant." Itō: "Our naval and land forces can bear any hardship." Li: "Taiwan is infested with malaria. You had lost many lives there before. Most of the Taiwanese smoke opium in order to counteract the effects of malaria." Itō: "When we take Taiwan, we shall forbid opium smoking". As for Li's plea for reciprocal trade rights Tōkyō's refusal signified Japan's new standing after its prestigious victory. There was no reciprocity between China and the West and thus there could be no reciprocity between Beijing and Tōkyō either. Japan could not afford to be placed in a more disadvantageous position than the European powers' in China, as the statesman Saionji Kimmochi (1849-1940) declared on 14 December 1895. See Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism*, pp. 60-67.

¹⁸⁷ The envoy to Berlin, Aoki disclosed to a British diplomat on 9 April that Tōkyō should not fear Saint Petersburg. A sizeable Russian army in Manchuria would suffer from starvation and the Japanese navy's blockade. See Skřivan and Skřivan, "Great Powers", p. 39.

¹⁸⁸ The vast indemnity covered Japan's war expenditures and gave a boost to domestic industrialization. On the other hand, it impoverished the Qing regime's already staggering economy and threw it into the hands of western creditors. Loans or leases of territory to Russia and Britain appeared as a debatable but in any case, desperate solution. See McLaren, *Political History*, p. 240. Japanese war expenditures amounted to 236,001,606 yen divided among the Army office (194,777,467 yen), Navy office (38,745,785) and administrative costs (2,478,354). This sum was defrayed by the Treasury's surplus and reserve funds. See Giichi Ono, *Expenditures of the Sino-Japanese War*, (New York 1922), pp. 35-47.

will see later. The peace treaty of Shimonoseki was concluded on 1 April 1895 granting Japan its first ever *gaichi* colonies.

In the face of the challenge posed by the West, early Japan despite being still weak and poor, responded by acting exactly like it. Tōkyō's adjacent territories in the North, South and West were invaded, and placed under its protection in different degrees. In 1895 Japan was ready to put in practice the same patterns in Taiwan.

11. Taiwan, the first Japanese colony

11.1 The first Japanese expedition in Taiwan

Let us return to the Formosa debate at the time of the Soejima mission. Foreign Office official Yanagiwara Sakimitsu's was sent to Beijing to ascertain the question of Chinese jurisdiction over the "barbarian" part of Taiwan. If Chinese did in fact exercise jurisdiction, they had to assume responsibility, punish the savages and compensate the families of the deceased sailors. If that was not the case however, Yanagiwara was instructed to enquire whether the Chinese government would have any objections to Japan dispatching a punitive expedition to the southern part of the island. On June 21 1873 Yanagiwara reached the conclusion, during the negotiations with the Yamen Ministers that China had no jurisdiction over the southern part of the island and thus Tōkyō had the right to dispatch an expedition and punish the aboriginals that had murdered its subjects, the Ryūkyūans. Asked about the status of Taiwan's populace the Ministers responded: "There are two kinds of aborigines on this island. The aborigines who have been subjugated are called jukuban (barbarians inside the Qing jurisdiction); we have set up prefectures and administered them. The other aborigines who have not yet been subjugated by us are called seiban (barbarians outside the Qing jurisdiction). They are beyond the influence of Chinese civilization (huawai) and also beyond our jurisdiction". The Japanese understood that Beijing recognized its absence of sovereignty over the aboriginal territories and that it was now up to Japan to act. The Chinese carelessly renounced their responsibility gifting in practice Tōkyō carte blanche to invade Taiwan. What happened next, is a matter of contention.¹ Yanagiwara supposedly informed the Chinese of Tōkyō's intention to act independently to chastise the "raw barbarians" that had committed the atrocities back in December 1871 and were living beyond the Chinese borders: "The Japanese government, therefore, intends to conquer the aborigines immediately. However, our

¹ There are no recorded accounts of the meeting a fact that contributes to the confusion and controversy that surrounds the issue. Edward Howard House (1836-1901) a pro Japanese journalist gave the following explanation as to why Soejima or Yanagiwara neglect to obtain a written agreement from the Qing authorities: "The fact of their [China's] neither exercising nor claiming control over the savage region [of Formosa] was so commonly recognized that nothing beyond a verbal allusion to it was regarded necessary.... To demand a written acknowledgement of what was an established truth appeared both unnecessary and injudicious". See Wayne C. McWilliams, "East Meets East. The Soejima Mission to China, 1873" in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (Autumn, 1975), p. 267. On the other hand Li Hung-chang attacked the Japanese on the matter: "The Japanese deliberately avoided written notification of her [Japan's] action. Because once China replied with commitment to the investigation of the matter, the Japanese would not be able to send their troops at will. It is unthinkable that countries will handle such an important event without formal documents in the process of the diplomatic exchanges." See Lung-chih Chang, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony: Qing and Japanese Sovereignty Debates and Territorial Projects in Taiwan, 1874-1906*, Ph.D Dissertation, Harvard University 2003, p. 59.

Minister (Soejima) restrained the popular call for a punitive expedition in order to promote amity between the two countries”.² However, there must have been a miscommunication because in the following year when the Yamen was actually notified of the Japanese expedition was shocked; it affirmed that the Japanese “had spoken not of a military action...but of the dispatch of officials to the aboriginal territories of Taiwan”.³ In typical fashion in May 1874 the Yamen sent a vague memorandum to Foreign Minister Terashima Munenori stating that Taiwan’s “territories were remote regions of China belonging to China” but the “aborigines were beyond Chinese legal and administrative control”.⁴ The two sides also used different meanings of sovereignty, one deriving from Chinese practice and the other from European. For Beijing the absence of effective governability did not mean the loss of sovereignty over a territory. In contrast and in accordance with modern international law Tōkyō perceived Beijing’s declared lack of factual authority as evidence of these territories’ vacancy: aboriginal lands were *res nullius* and thus a punitive expedition legitimate.⁵

Soejima was eagerly convinced on these points by conferring with the US Minister DeLong and the Foreign Ministry adviser LeGendre. During a meeting with the former on 24 October 1872 the Japanese Foreign Minister was told that Taiwan was “floating, and would become the possession of the first to take it”;⁶ since Qing rule in Taiwan was nominal despite the Chinese claims, the island could be annexed by anyone willing to undertake the arduous task of civilizing it. DeLong exalted the strategic position and natural resources of the island. He further reassured the Japanese Foreign Minister that the US government would not oppose the prospective change in ownership: “U.S. did not occupy foreign lands, it was quite happy to see states friendly to [the U.S.] occupy others’ lands and develop them”. Soejima’s fervor for expansion ignited. By these actions the US Minister was planning to bring Japan closer to the US and the Western powers. He genuinely feared a joint Sino-Japanese action against the West.⁷ In the following days Soejima, through DeLong’s mediation met with “Formosa expert” LeGendre and became even more confident over the dispatch of an armed mission overseas. On October 25 the former Amoy consul confirmed that the Chinese had already admitted that parts of Taiwan lay beyond their

² Norihito Mizuno, “Early Meiji Policies towards the Ryukyus and the Taiwanese Aboriginal Territories” in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (May, 2009), pp. 714-715.

³ Norihito Mizuno, “Qing China’s Reaction to the 1874 Japanese Expedition to the Taiwanese Aboriginal Territories” in *Sino-Japanese Studies*, Vol. 16 (2009), p. 103.

⁴ Although the Qing government asserted that Taiwan was administrated normally as a district of the Fukien province it failed to incorporate the mountainous eastern and south-western areas into the administrative units of the prefecture. See Grace Fox, *Britain and Japan, 1858-1883*, (London, 1969), p. 281.

⁵ Mizuno, “Qing China’s Reaction”, p. 104.

⁶ Hideaki Uemura, “The colonial annexation of Okinawa and the logic of international law: the formation of an ‘indigenous people’ in East Asia” in *Japanese Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2, p. 110.

⁷ Sandra Caruthers, *Charles LeGendre, American Diplomacy, and Expansionism in Meiji Japan, 1868-1893*, Ph.D Dissertation, University of Colorado 1966, pp. 59-61.

control.⁸ Two days later he encouraged Soejima to send 2,000 men claiming that this force would be sufficient to subdue the aborigines. Once there the garrison could not be easily removed. The later boastfully responded that he could gather 10,000 with no effort; regardless of the domestic problems there were 400,000 “brave” but discontent ex-samurai willing to prove their martial valor. LeGendre in addition supplied maps, recommended the hiring of American advisors and provided detailed diplomatic and military strategy suggestions.⁹ Peshine Smith an American legal adviser to the Foreign Ministry also suggested that Japan was compelled to acquire the islands if China was unable or unwilling to effectively rule the southern Taiwan tribes. LeGendre in his memoranda to Soejima illustrated that bringing civilization to the barbarians was a sufficient reason to justify the colonization of a territory according to western standards. In his memoranda spanning from November 1872 to mid-March 1874 he persistently suggested the occupation not only of the aboriginal territory but of the island’s entirety and even Korea to secure Japan’s strategic position against the powers’ imperialistic schemes. Since the indigenous Taiwan was backward it was likely that Westerners would employ the terra nullius principle as an excuse to occupy the island. Tōkyō had to obtain Taiwan either by enticing Beijing or by forcibly occupying it “in order to uphold its prestige in the East”.¹⁰ Furthermore, the Chinese claims were superficial and unfounded from the international law’s point of view.¹¹ LeGendre’s final memo, on 13 March 1874 to Councilor of State Ōkuma, argued that Japan had to punish and “civilize the whole aboriginal population” but its “real object will be the annexation of aboriginal Formosa”.¹² Soejima was delighted.¹³ Two days after Yanagiwara concluded negotiations on June 21 1873, Grand Councillor Saigō Takamori dispatched agents to survey Taiwan and Southern China. He also appointed Major Fukushima Tadashige (Reisuke) as Japan’s consul in Amoy.¹⁴ Imperial

⁸ As part of his investigation of the March 1867 massacre of American sailors by the aborigines (Rover incident) LeGendre demanded that the Qing authorities punish the culprits and to exercise formal jurisdiction in line with international law. Otherwise he warned that the southern territories could end up as targets of western imperial designs. Chinese authorities considering the great price in money, effort and lives that the proposal entailed, remained unmoved. They responded to LeGendre’s overtures by insisting that Beijing held sovereignty over the entire island but the aboriginal territory to the south lay outside of China’s legal jurisdiction and administration. See Robert Eskildsen, “Of Civilization and Savages: The Mimetic Imperialism of Japan’s 1874 Expedition to Taiwan”, in *The American Historical Review* Vol. 107, No. 2 (April 2002), p. 395.

⁹ McWilliams, “East Meets East”, pp. 242-3.

¹⁰ Leonard Gordon, “Japan’s Abortive Colonial Venture in Taiwan, 1874” in *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (Jun., 1965), p. 172.

¹¹ Contrary to these claims LeGendre stated in June 1867 while exploring Taiwan: “If the native territory is not Chinese in population, it is Chinese in fact . . . having a sort of preemption claim on it”. See Caruthers, *Charles LeGendre*, p. 39.

¹² LeGendre explained: When this has been done, and after the Bontans have been reduced or have submitted, Japan will declare that, as the pacification of the island depends upon its being occupied by a civilized power, since it had been found vacant and the Japanese forces are there, there they shall remain; and that, for the benefit of the whole civilized world the aboriginal portion of Formosa is declared to be annexed to the Empire of Japan. See *Ibid.*, p. 139.

¹³ Mizuno, “Early Meiji Policies”, p. 707.

¹⁴ It was probably in early December 1873 when Fukushima submitted his report for a Taiwan expedition to Iwakura pointing out the absence of Qing authority in South Taiwan. On December 17

Councilor Itagaki and General Saigō Tsugumichi (1843-1902), the younger brother of Takamori, also endorsed a military expedition. Furthermore, on 8 March 1873 sailors from the Oda prefecture, in Japan proper, were once again mistreated by the aborigines. Saigō in a letter dated August 3 1873 he informed Prime Minister Sanjō Sanetomi that domestic discontent was piling up and the Imperial Guard was adamantly asking for swift action against Taiwan.¹⁵ The aggressive tendencies that had not found an outlet in Korea had to be directed elsewhere. A far away adventure was preferable than another domestic one. On November 11 1873 a warship was sent to Taiwanese waters and at around the same time 8 army officers departed for China to collect intelligence disguised as students.¹⁶ The overseas campaign would yield only benefits for the Meiji government. It would reassert Japan's position in Asia, test the reorganized Meiji armed forces, calm the internal tensions, acquire recognition by the foreign powers, and secure the country's southern borders. If Tōkyō managed to annex the island would obtain its entrance in the group of the imperial powers discarding once and for all the title of the backward, endangered, semi-colonized nation as early as 1874. Even if that was not the case, a western-style punitive expedition against savages that often threatened the navigation in the Far East could gain the sympathy of the powers and define the Japanese as civilized in contrast to the barbarous aborigines.¹⁷

Ōkubo Toshimichi received the reports of the agents that surveyed Taiwan in line with Saigo's orders. Ibid., p. 722.

¹⁵ The historian Edwin Pak-Wah Leung suggests that Ryūkyūan crews were mistreated by the aborigines numerous times in the past; Tōkyō decided to redress the 1871 incident to satisfy the agitated expansionist elements in Japan. These disappointed by the lack of action against Korea rallied around Etō Shimpei who had launched a massive anti-government rebellion in February 1874 in Saga. See Edwin Pak-Wah Leung, "The Quasi-War in East Asia: Japan's Expedition to Taiwan and the Ryūkyū Controversy" in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (1983), pp. 262-265.

¹⁶ Mizuno, "Early Meiji Policies", pp. 718-722.

¹⁷ The Japanese press throughout this period highlighted the nation's civilization mission and challenged the western view of the country as semi-civilized. The pressure exerted by the foreign powers on Japan could be displaced onto the aborigines. To emphasize Japan's progress and cultural superiority in Asia the press described the enemy, the aborigines as cruel, flesh eating barbarians. Newspapers often exaggerated the aborigines' ferocious and inhuman nature. The 16th April 1874 edition of the *Yūbin hōchi shinbun* portrayed them as "wild and rapacious, have large bodies and are very strong". Some journalists perpetuated the image of the native Taiwanese as cannibals. *Japan Daily Herald* published on May 25 that they live "by eating the meat of the people they defeat in battle". Journalist Okada Jisuke, in his May 1874 reports exalted Japanese martial valor in contrast to the cunning barbarians who "do not know ethics". The pictorials depicted the Japanese in a progressive light, robust, modern, dressed in Western attire in contrast to the wretched savages in order to signify the cultural abyss that separated them. The *Tokyo Nichi Nichi shinbun* published on April 16 1874 read: "...Our proud regiments and stately armies are now headed toward that lone island. In a matter of ten days, the Rising Sun flag shall shine its light in the four directions, and with that, the righteousness of our nation shall be known to all. Surely this cannot fail to be a moment when our hearts as humble subjects will dance with emotion! And at that time, we shall succeed in shaming the Westerners". See Eskildsen, "Of Civilization and Savages", pp. 339-406. and Matthew Fraleigh "Japan's First War Reporter: Kishida Ginkō and the Taiwan Expedition" in *Japanese Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1, (May 2010), p. 53.

Finance Minister Inoue and his Deputy Shibusawa Eiichi, (1840-1931) expressed their disagreement to the proposed expedition on November 26 1872. Reforms at home and maintenance of peaceful relations with China had to be Japan's priorities as Inoue affirmed on December 18. Kido Takayoshi, Minister of Education and Grand Councilor and Itō Hirobumi, the Minister of Civil Engineering and also a Grand Councilor were also against it. Military unpreparedness as Yamagata put it was the main but not the only obstacle. Due to the fiscal difficulties and the instability of the new regime the government at the time chose to dispatch an envoy to negotiate with Beijing.¹⁸ Soejima before obtaining his appointment claimed: "No one except me is able to prevent foreign powers aiming at Taiwan from impeding our imperial undertaking, to convince Qing China to cede the aboriginal territories to us, to bring the land under civilization, and to gain the confidence of the inhabitants. I entreat your Imperial Majesty to send me to China to ratify the treaty, and to proceed to Beijing to convince foreign delegations not to question the treaty with China, to confer with the Qing government on the Audience Question, and to give prior notice to the government of a punitive expedition to Taiwan. And, with the expedition, we should clarify the demarcation of Taiwan and develop half of the island". To the agitated troops anxious to attack the unruly tribes, namely the Botans or Boutans that had murdered imperial subjects he announced that: "they would be called upon to occupy aboriginal territory, to colonize it, and to consolidate that area as the southern gate of the Japanese Empire". On February 17, he disclosed to Ōkuma: "I am fairly confident of obtaining half of the island through negotiations. Resort to arms may be unnecessary even if the entire island is desired. I believe that this opportunity must not be missed in order to obtain half of the island now and to acquire the entire land through negotiations in four or five years".¹⁹

Thus, the expedition would not solely be a righteous enterprise to demonstrate Japan's determination to protect its people to the civilized nations of the world. Nor a mere act to elevate its prestige.²⁰ Under the initial direction of Soejima and after his resignation in October 1873, of Ōkuma Shigenobu, the new Finance Minister, the savages' chastisement evolved into an organized plan for the seizure of the entire island. According to a Foreign Ministry official, Soejima was concerned about the rumor that Berlin, among other suitors, was interested in Taiwan and desired to act first and seize it on Tōkyō's behalf. On the other hand, Inoue Kaoru while in favour of annexing foreign territory disapproved the expenditure that such an expedition would demand. He stressed on November 18 1872 that Taiwan is a strategically important island, desired by the Great Powers and therefore, Beijing amidst great

¹⁸ Mizuno, "Early Meiji Policies", p. 709

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 711.

²⁰ Ōyama Tsunayoshi vice-governor of Kagoshima declared upon hearing the news of the massacre on 31 August 1872: "I, Tsunayoshi, plead with the government to launch a punitive expedition to chastise the aborigines for the sake of imperial prestige. I would therefore like to be authorized to borrow battleships and annihilate the ringleaders and then enhance imperial prestige overseas and console the anger of the victimized islanders. I beg the government to grant my request", see Ibid., p. 701.

difficulties could be persuaded to surrender it to Japan. The Daijōkan and in particular Sanjō on March 9 1873, before the departure of Soejima's mission to Beijing alarmed by his overtures dismissed LeGendre's propositions and gave specific instructions to the Japanese ambassador to avoid friction with the Qing government. Upon Soejima's return in Tōkyō on 25 July 1873, regardless of the mission's presumed success, the government's priority was the debate about Korea, the political crisis that was dividing the nation. It was only after the official settlement of the Korean issue in October 1873 and Soejima's resignation that Sanjō instructed Ōkubo, the Home Minister, and Ōkuma to investigate into the Taiwan incident in early January 1874. On January 29 and while tensions were still high, Ōkuma in turn assigned to Yanagiwara and his colleague Tei Nagayasu to submit a report on the matter. On February 6 they presented "The outline of the disposition of the Taiwanese aboriginal territories". The Cabinet on the same day approved their proposal and granted 500,000 yen for the dispatch of an expedition.²¹

In the draft the capture of South Taiwan was presented as the Japanese government's duty. Furthermore, Japanese consuls should be dispatched to Taiwan "to undertake public education by telling the Chinese in these places the sincere desire of Japan to open up the aboriginal territory and civilize the tribes".²² Iwakura after hearing the content of the recommendation exclaimed "I hope a plan will be adopted to make it our dependency".²³ In his 28 March correspondence with Ōkubo the former disclosed that Saigō had proposed to him the seizure of the aboriginal territories. However, the Cabinet did not include such a directive in its subsequent guidelines.²⁴ If an annexation plan was to be implemented it was highly classified, known only among the main directors of the operation. The pretext for action was the massacre of the Ryūkyūan and Oda sailors and its evident objective the demonstration of sovereignty over the Ryūkyū Islands. Subduing the barbarians was an action to avert further attacks on Japanese subjects in the future. Inclined to maintain friendly relations with China, Tōkyō decided to dispatch another ambassador to Beijing to negotiate and reassure the Chinese that neither the Ryūkyūan issue nor the imminent conflict in South Taiwan signified hostility. On 8 April Yanagiwara Sakimitsu was named Minister plenipotentiary to Beijing while the imperial edict of 4 April 1874 appointed Saigō Tsugumichi as "Commander in Chief in Charge of the Barbarian Part of Taiwan". Admiral Akamatsu Noriyoshi (1841-1920) and Major General Tani Kanjō or Tateki (1837-1911),²⁵ were appointed as his second in command.²⁶ 6 ships,

²¹ Ibid., pp. 723-724.

²² Shogo Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire: China and Japan's Encounter with European International Society*, (New York, 2009), p. 152.

²³ Gordon, "Japan's Abortive Colonial Venture", p. 175.

²⁴ Mizuno, "Early Meiji Policies", pp. 725-726.

²⁵ General Tani envisioned the seizure not only of the aboriginal part but of the Qing possessions in the North as well. In the future Japan could use the island as a base for hostile operations against China, sending "robbers to instigate rebellions" and taking advantage of the chaos to obtain parts of the country. That was the predisposition of Tani, one of the most important members of the mission. See Danny Orbach, "'By not stopping': The first Taiwan expedition (1874) and the Roots of Japanese

three transport and tree gun vessels were chartered for the mission. Saigō intended to annex the island and distribute plots of Taiwanese land to his men convinced that the castigation of the natives would not provide sufficient satisfaction to the zealous ex-samurai from Satsuma. His troops were named “colonizing soldiers” (shokumin-hei). A concurrent edict addressed to him read: “the purpose is to induce the aborigines to become civilized gradually after subduing them and finally promote salutary enterprises between them and the Japanese government”. These stationing military colonists would be installed in small branch camps that would form the basis of permanent settlements along the Taiwanese coast.²⁷ 300 women and even children were said to have followed the soldiers as many of them believed that they would be permanently settled in the island. Saigō’s associate Kodama Toshikuni who was dispatched to gather intelligence in Taiwan, advocated the reclamation of land for agriculture and the permanent settlement in the island. By early March Saigō had undertaken full scale military and colonization preparations in secrecy in order not to provoke protests by the foreign envoys. Ōkuma began to acquire planting seeds for cultivation in Taiwan.²⁸ According to some sources 2/3 of the amassed forces were made up by laborers, men able to establish a military colony by constructing barracks, encampments, wells, roads and bridges.²⁹ LeGendre was appointed military advisor to the expedition and was promised the title of the governor if Japan acquired Taiwan permanently.³⁰ Finally Ōkuma was named Director of the Bureau of Aboriginal Affairs on Taiwan with headquarters at Nagasaki subordinated to the Cabinet.³¹ Saigō in line with the decree of the 6th of February was ordered to limit and concentrate his action on the military campaign and leave diplomacy to the government. In case of Chinese or Western protests he had to appeal to “the imperial throne for orders”.³² The expedition was to be accompanied by two American advisers: Lieutenant Commander Douglas Cassel (1846-1875) with the task of finding suitable places for the establishment of colonies in the eastern coast of Taiwan and Lieutenant James R. Wasson who had been appointed the director in charge of the necessary field works.³³

On the 2nd and 13th of April the British Minister in Japan Sir Harry Parkes enquired Foreign Minister Terashima Munenori if Tōkyō had obtained Beijing’s permission for the proposed campaign. If the Qing government considered the Japanese action hostile and war broke out Britain had to prohibit the employment of British citizens and ships in the conflict.³⁴ At the same time he telegraphed to vice

Military Disobedience”, in *The Journal of Japanese Studies*, Volume 42, Number 1, (Winter 2016) pp. 49-50.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 39.

²⁷ Eskildsen, “Of Civilization and Savages”, p. 397.

²⁸ Orbach, ““By not stopping””, p. 38.

²⁹ Gordon, “Japan’s Abortive Colonial Venture”, p. 175.

³⁰ Caruthers, *Charles LeGendre*, p. 62.

³¹ Mizuno, “Early Meiji Policies”, pp. 726-727.

³² Orbach, ““By not stopping””, p. 40.

³³ Gordon, “Japan’s Abortive Colonial Venture”, p. 176.

³⁴ The British ship *Yorkshire* was contracted by the Meiji government to take part in the campaign besides the Japanese *Nisshin* and *Takeharu*. The *Yorkshire* at the end was ruled out whereas two British

Admiral Charles Shadwell (1814-1886) at Hong Kong to keep him abreast of the developments. Shadwell dispatched the warship *Hornet* to inspect the island's ports for the time being; more British vessels would menacingly follow in the area unless Tōkyō showed restraint.³⁵ In addition fearful of a protracted conflict that would endanger British commercial interests in Taiwan³⁶ and the Far East in general Parkes convinced the Spanish and Russian Ministers to declare their neutrality in the event of an upcoming war. On 9 April Parkes questioned Terashima as to the purpose of the endeavor and the location of the Meiji troops' landing. The next day the Japanese Foreign Minister replied that the expedition's aim was not to wage war on China but to make Taiwan's coasts safe for every nation's sailors and castaways.³⁷ He also cited similar retributive actions taken by the powers in the past.³⁸ Under Parkes' influence the *Japan Daily Herald* edition of 17th April criticized the American advisers' association with an unjustified attack upon Chinese territory. As a result John Armor Bingham, the new Minister after DeLong's departure in September 1873, stated on 19 April that involvement of American vessels and personnel to a campaign against China would be a violation of the 1858 Sino-US treaty and international law. The US Minister demanded to see Beijing's written consent to the expedition. Bingham partially to avoid the infringement of the Sino-American relations ordered the exclusion of the Americans and of the transport ship *New York* from the campaign.³⁹ The German Minister Max von Brandt also warned that the expedition would result in failure and confided to the other foreign envoys that a bloody war between Japan and China was very probable. Ōkubo and the rest of the Council of State did not expect such a reaction and shocked by Westerners' immediate change of heart decided to postpone the campaign on 19 April 1874. The Americans in particular had chiefly encouraged and formulated the Taiwan policy⁴⁰ and had

assistants, named P. Manson and Patterson annulled their contracts after Parkes' protests. See Caruthers, *Charles LeGendre*, p. 138.

³⁵ Leonard Gordon, "The Cession of Taiwan: A Second Look" in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (Nov., 1976), p. 551.

³⁶ The ports of Taiwan were opened to foreign trade since the 1860s. In 1873 the exports and imports of Tainan-Takow (Kaohsiung) ports amounted to 602,826 pounds and those of Keelung and Tamsui to 473,964. Britain held the lion's share of this trade but German merchants had started making headway in the 1870s. Robert Swinhoe (1836-1877) the British consul at Tainan in 1861 proposed to his government the seizure of the island's east part as a penal colony. See Fox, *Britain and Japan*, p. 284.

³⁷ Orbach, "By not stopping", p. 41.

³⁸ Adoption of Western civilization went hand in hand with adoption of Western imperialistic practices. In other words colonialism was not the result but a prerequisite in the path to modernization and a means of finally resisting the Western encroachment. See Eskildsen, "Of Civilization and Savages", pp. 391-392.

³⁹ On 24 April 1874 Ōkuma ordered the American experts to remain in Japan. Cassel and Wasson had already left for Taiwan but the *New York*, still anchored at Nagasaki, was detained. On 4 May Saigō agreed to send back the two advisors but he never did. See Gordon, "Japan's Abortive Colonial Venture", pp. 176-177.

⁴⁰ Besides LeGendre, J. M. Batchelder an American merchant in China supplied intelligence on military installations in Taiwan and even proposed to Ōkuma the acquisition of three of his ships for

convinced the Japanese of the legitimacy of their undertaking. Besides, preventing the savages from endangering lives and trade in the Far East served a greater humanitarian purpose. Meiji leaders believed that Western governments would look favorably on any action aiming to improve conditions in Formosa.⁴¹ When Parkes learned from Soejima on 7 August 1873 the Japanese intention to attack the aborigines he did not express any objection. That was also the case with the Ministers Thomas Francis Wade of Britain and Frederick F. Low⁴² of the United States in Beijing.⁴³ However Wade, brought up to speed by Parkes, informed the Zongli Yamen on 18 April of Tōkyō's intentions and instructed the British merchants and consuls in China to refrain from any kind of cooperation with the Japanese against China. The stunned Chinese responded that they had complete ignorance of Japanese plans⁴⁴ and they had not granted their permission. Japan at the time of the Saga rebellion (February-April 1874) appeared to them politically and economically unable to undertake an overseas campaign. Finally they claimed jurisdiction over the entire island of Taiwan. Wade, conscious of the Chinese feebleness, was concerned that the expeditionary force would attempt the capture of the island with or without the consent of Beijing or even Tōkyō's for that matter.⁴⁵

Saigō Tsugumichi with the imperial edict of 4 April did not feel obliged to respect the foreigners' wish or the government's frustrating and humiliating decision. Waiting in Nagasaki with his 3,658 men, including 295 Satsuma volunteers he grew restless.⁴⁶ A disgraceful annulment of the expedition or suspension of the operations would enrage the soldiers thirsty adventure and glory soldiers. The *Japan Daily Herald* published on 18 May that soldiers were threatening to decapitate Saigō in case the enterprise was annulled. On the 27th he sent Fukushima with 270 soldiers on board of the *Yūkōmaru*⁴⁷ to Amoy in South China. The latter reached the city on 3

the expedition. See Joyce C. Lebra, *Ōkuma Shigenobu: Statesman of Meiji Japan*, (Canberra, 1973), pp. 25-26.

⁴¹ Sandra Caruthers, "Filibustering to Formosa: General Charles LeGendre and the Japanese" in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Nov., 1971), p. 449.

⁴² Low did not voice his disapproval at the time. However, he preferred that Japan attacked Korea rather than Taiwan as he wrote to DeLong on 26 December 1872: "It seems to me that if the Japs are really spoiling for a fight they had better go for Corea (sic). In that case the sympathy and moral support of all the Treaty Powers could be counted on". See McWilliams, "East Meets East", p. 263.

⁴³ Mizuno, "Early Meiji Policies", pp. 727-729.

⁴⁴ In contrast to Beijing's ignorance the Qing officials in Fukien, witnessing Japanese agents surveying Taiwan in late March suspected that a hostile action was probable. See Mizuno, "Qing China's Reaction", p. 106.

⁴⁵ Fox, *Britain and Japan*, p. 290, 298.

⁴⁶ Mizuno, "Early Meiji Policies", p. 729.

⁴⁷ In May 1874 the government bought thirteen vessels for 1,506,800 yen to replace the revoked foreign ships. The contract for the transportation of troops and supplies was awarded to the Mitsubishi steamship company due to Ōkuma's close relations with Iwasaki Yatarō (1835-1885) founder of the company. It was the start of a promising partnership. The government found a keen collaborator to its schemes and developed the strategically crucial maritime sector against the foreign competitors; the ships were granted to Iwasaki as well as an annual subsidy of 250,000 yen after the end of the operation. In addition, it purchased the land facilities and 18 vessels of rival foreign companies, and transferred them to Mitsubishi strengthening the company and by extension the Japanese economy. In

May, delivered the news of the expedition via a formal letter to the Qing Viceroy of Fujian and Zhejiang⁴⁸ and started assembling supplies for the incoming troops. The Viceroy condemned and demanded the annulment of the mission 8 days later. Back in Nagasaki the secretary of the Cabinet Kanai Yukiyasu (1833-1907) arrived at the city and ordered its governor to delay the departure of the warships. To avert the international crisis Ōkubo also rushed to Nagasaki to convince Saigō to comply with the Daijōkan's new orders. He arrived there on May 3 but the second wave (4 troopships) had departed the day before. The expedition was not canceled. It was authorized on the spot but post facto. Hereafter its aims were greatly restricted under the pressure of the foreign representatives' protests. If China's reaction was stiffened the government could claim that Saigō had acted as a marauder without Tōkyō's approval in an effort to evade the international complications. On 4 May Saigō, Ōkubo and Ōkuma agreed to proceed with the punishment of the savaged but to dismiss the rest of the foreign advisors and possibly abandon the colonization plan. Tōkyō's secret plan for the swift capture of the island was unexpectedly compromised by the Foreign Ministers. On 17 May 1874 Saigō left for Taiwan with the rest of his forces on board of the *Takasago Maru* (Takasago was the name given to Taiwan by the Japanese in the Tokugawa period) steered by the Captain A.R. Brown, a Scot, who had remained on board despite Parkes' efforts.⁴⁹ Saigō landed 5 days later. On 16 May Prime Minister Sanjō approved formally the fait accompli; the government came to understand that the revocation of the nation's first military venture abroad could result in embarrassment and further discontent at home.⁵⁰

On 6 May 1874 the *Yūkōmaru* having left Amoy the previous day reached Liangkiau Bay (Hengchun) in Taiwan's southernmost tip. Upon landing⁵¹ on the morning of the 8th, the Chinese interpreter of the mission approached the friendly

exchange it was Mitsubishi that transported the government's troops during the Satsuma Rebellion in 1887. Mitsubishi bolstered by state subsidies and operated by foreign technicians, workers and instructors, opened up the Yokohama-Shanghai (1875), Taiwan and Korea lines and forced out of competition the British "Peninsula and Oriental Steam Navigation Company" that was operating in the Far East. See Kozo Yamamura, "The Founding of Mitsubishi: A Case Study of Japanese Business History" in *The Economic Development of Modern Japan, 1868-1945: From the Meiji Restoration to the Second World War*, vol. 1, ed. S. Toliday, (Cheltenham, 2001), pp. 350-356. Iwasaki's and Mitsubishi's participation in the 1874 expedition is considered by some a selfless, virtuous patriotic deed to this day. See Mark Munsterhjelm, "Corporate Protectors of State Sovereignty: Mitsubishi's and a Taiwan Affiliate's Accounts of Relations with Taiwan Aborigines" in *Asian Ethnicity*, Vol. 15(3), pp. 361-369.

⁴⁸ The Viceroy was not thrilled about the news: "If Japanese enter the central region of Taiwan, I will demand the local authorities to defend with the troops and local militia. However, if the Japanese only seek revenge on the aborigines for killing the Ryukyu victims, we will reason with them...". See Chang, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony*, p. 63.

⁴⁹ Mizuno, "Early Meiji Policies", 730.

⁵⁰ Orbach, "By not stopping", p. 45.

⁵¹ The transfer of men and supplies ashore was quite "confused" for the "official reporter" of the expedition, the American journalist House. It was fortunate that the local tribes were friendly and did not attack the unorganized landing troops on the spot. They were lacking modern equipment and the outdated logistics system did not differ substantially from what was used in the 16th century. See Edward Howard House, *The Japanese Expedition to Formosa*, (Tokyo, 1875), pp. 46-53.

natives of the village called Sialiao and invited them to the Japanese campsite. They were told that they Japanese came to punish the Botan tribe, responsible for the massacre of the emperor's subjects. Many were recruited to dig trenches and build cottages for the Japanese while two of them were retained as interpreters. Employing the service of these interpreters the Japanese contacted the local tribes who, except the Botans and their allies Kujukuts, welcomed the expedition.⁵² The Chinese residents did not offer any opposition. Two days later Fukushima, Wasson and Cassel decided to move the camp near Sialiao. On 10 May Admiral Akamatsu and General Tani arrived at the site with 500 men and six days later supplies, especially timber for the construction of loggings, laborers and more troops reached the camp. On 17 May 100 Japanese in a reconnaissance mission two miles eastward from their camp were attacked by some natives and lost two men. Akamatsu on board of the *Nisshin* surveyed the southern shores until the 19th when his crew was fired upon by the aborigines.⁵³ Akamatsu and the two American experts interviewed the chieftain of the local tribes, Yee-suk known as Isa, who suggested caution in dealing with the ferocious Botan tribe. A skirmish took place on the 17th but the decisive battle occurred on 22 May when Colonel Sakuma Samata's (1844-1915) men engaged the enemy. Samata already a hero of the Saga rebellion was to be a general and the fifth colonial Governor-General of Taiwan in April 1906. In the battle of Sekimon (stonegate) 30 to 50 Botans, among them their chief and his son, were killed. The Japanese lost 6 men. The victors took the heads of 12 fallen enemies according to the medieval samurai custom.⁵⁴ On the same day Saigō, upon disembarking from the *Takasagu Maru* among 1500 soldiers and workers, ordered his soldiers not to loot, rape, or harm "innocent aborigines".⁵⁵ On 21 June two Chinese warships appeared menacingly two miles off the Japanese camp. On the 23th high rank Qing envoys met with Saigō at Liangkiau to deliver the Fukien Viceroy's response to his letter presented by Fukushima 20 days earlier. The Chinese stated that the island belonged to China and the invaders after the eradication of the savage pockets had to surrender the area to Beijing. They also suggested that they participated in the military operations alongside Saigō's forces. The commander politely rejected the idea, maintained that these regions were not under the control of China and declared that the future of Taiwan did not depend on him. He was just directing the campaign; the rest was in Tōkyō's hands. Similar meetings took place for the two following days.⁵⁶

⁵² James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present: history, people, resources, and commercial prospects: tea, camphor, sugar, gold, coal, sulphur, economical plants, and other productions*, (London-New York, 1903), pp. 126-127.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁵⁴ Fox, *Britain and Japan*, p. 296.

⁵⁵ These orders were not obeyed to the letter. Akamatsu, Tani, Cassel and Wasson repeatedly faced insubordination, violent behavior towards the Taiwanese coolies and "shameful illicit relationships with women". Wasson in particular in his report to Ōkuma lamented the soldiers unorderly attacked the enemy against orders. At the battle of Sekimon Admiral Akamatsu admitted "that the men had acted without orders". See Orbach, "By not stopping", pp. 47-48.

⁵⁶ House, *The Japanese Expedition*, pp. 78-79.

On 25 May Saigō conferred with Yee-suk and four minor leaders at his camp. He announced his objective to vanquish the Botans and the Kusukuts and asked for their collaboration. LeGendre had advised Saigō Tsugumichi that certain tribes could be allied against the hostile Bontan tribe, by promising them a reward in the form of the Bontans' lands.⁵⁷ Yee-suk accepted but objected to the Japanese proposal to lease a piece of aboriginal land on the East coast of Taiwan.⁵⁸ After the Sekimon battle the Japanese force pressed forward looking for the Botans' main settlement. It was evident that the enemy could not put much of a fight. Tōkyō had misjudged the population, political organization and manpower of the tribes in the interior of South Taiwan. According to Yee-suk assessments the entire 18 tribes of the Liangkiau valley could amass only 2,360 men. The rival Botans and Kusukuts clans numbered 250 and 190 fighting men respectively whereas the Japanese detachment consisted of 3,500 troops. Without proper maps, locating their villages, a process which involved the crossing of steep mountainous regions with inexistent roads and swollen streams under extreme heat, was more challenging than the fight per se.⁵⁹ On 2 June, Tani's group was supposed to explore the interior but lost its way and small squads set out to find it. Saigō divided his force in three columns and set the 1st of June as the date for the commencement of operations in the interior.⁶⁰ When the main force marched

⁵⁷ Caruthers, *Charles LeGendre*, p. 162.

⁵⁸ In the 15 May edition of the *Tokyo Nichi Nichi shimbun* the journalist Kishida Ginkō (1833–1905) justified Saigō's attempt to establish a colony: "The major purpose of this expedition is to expand the imperial domain of our nation. Our troops first occupied the territory south of the Chinese domain and set up a colony. We will gradually station troops from the north along the Chinese boundary open up the forests and civilize the savages." See Chang, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony*, pp. 46-47. Ginkō served as war reporter to Taiwan, the first of his kind in Japan, from where he colourfully described not only the military engagements but also his aspirations. His expansionistic views were particularly popular; the newspaper during the publication of Ginkō's column "News From Taiwan" increased its sales by 50%. On 28 April, he wrote: "Our advance into Taiwan is the first since Toyotomi Hideyoshi's attack on Korea and all of us who are accompanying the expedition must bear this fact in mind. Above all, we must be scrupulously careful not to do anything that might lead to the humiliation of our Great Japan. The beginnings of prosperity for our nation lie in this endeavor we are undertaking at present. We must ensure that affairs turn out well; then, the territory of the Japanese nation will be increasingly enlarged, frontiers opened, and trade enriched such that the honor of our imperial nation will shine to the whole world". On 15 May, he stressed: "Our government is now deploying troops and its intent is surely the following. The soldiers will first commence their operations in the land that lies to the south of the border with Chinese territory. Once they capture this land, they will make it a colony and then proceed to station troops throughout the land lying south of the Chinese border, gradually developing it. They will fell trees and burn brush, teaching and leading the native savages and thereby expanding the territory of our imperial state". On 13 June 1874 the journalist proposed yet again the colonization of the island whereas on his 28 June report he exalted the fertility of its soil. See Fraleigh "Japan's First War Reporter", pp. 54-60.

⁵⁹ The entire campaign cost 542 lives to the Japanese: 530 from illnesses and 12 as a result of the fighting. See Key-Hiuk Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order: Korea, Japan, and the Chinese Empire, 1860-1882*, (London, 1980), p. 196.

⁶⁰ The first column led by Tani headed towards Hongkang in the North with 500 men. The second, comprised by 300 soldiers, set course for Sekimon under Saigō. Akamatsu's column with 400 soldiers marched southwest to Chikisia, looking for the Kusukut base. See House, *The Japanese Expedition*, pp. 115-116.

against the Botans' base it discovered the graves of the Ryūkyūans murdered there in 1871.⁶¹ After a day traversing the jungle and overcoming obstacles set up by the enemy, they approached their objective; after some sporadic enemy fire that resulted in a few casualties the village was evacuated by its inhabitants that fled to the mountains. The settlement was burned to the ground by the invading force. Akamatsu's force en route to Kusukut suffered the losses of 3 men while 2 more were wounded but eventually occupied the village and torched it. Guards were set to patrol the deserted villages and the jungle paths and burn any villages that were associated with the enemy tribes. The main force retreated to Sialiao. On 4 June Saigō declared that the aborigines were subjugated.⁶²

In the evening following the Sekimon battle the leader of the Hongkang village rushed to the Japanese headquarters to request Tōkyō's official protection.⁶³ The annihilation of the fierce Botan tribe compelled the aborigines to submit to the conquerors. On June 9 a conference was held with the friendly tribes and the leaders of the conquered local villages. The aborigines received Japanese flags to hang at the entrance of their settlements as protection from their enemies; it was a sign of allegiance.⁶⁴ They also received gifts and money. The Japanese side requested and obtained in return the right to temporarily establish ports on Taiwan's east coast. On 11 June Akamatsu and Fukushima landed with 50 men at Kenting the site of the Rover Incident and distributed flags to the local chiefs. By the end of July South Taiwan's tribes had surrendered to the Japanese. However the foreign objections,⁶⁵ the island's unsanitary environment and the diseases that decimated the occupying force denoted that the plan to settle former Satsuma samurai on the island had to be abandoned. Saigō was himself suffering from the boredom and the tropical diseases due to the bad water and food was searching for a honorable excuse to leave after the end of the hostilities. Tani, noticing that as time passed the men's morale and discipline declined, requested from Tōkyō a detachment of military police to restore order. However, according to the volunteer in the expedition Adachi Tsunayuki only a small number of men wished to remain in the island.⁶⁶ One of Saigō secondary objectives was the importation and cultivation of foreign plants. For this purpose during these rather dull days he sought to establish a small experimental farm; the

⁶¹ The remains were entombed in an ancient temple in Okinawa in 1898 because those sailors had "died in the service of the state". See George H. Kerr, *Okinawa: The History of an Island People*, (Boston-Tokyo, 2000), pp. 451-452.

⁶² Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, pp. 147-149.

⁶³ House, *The Japanese Expedition*, p. 94.

⁶⁴ *Yūbin hōchi shinbun* and the *Kōbun tsūshi* newspapers on their June 15 edition outlined the friendship and the alliance between the two sides. The *Japan Daily Herald* of 23th June went a step further. Even if the aborigines did not understand flags as national symbols the newspaper implied that they were now under the Japanese protection. For the ultranationalists South Taiwan had now become Tōkyō's protectorate. Eskildsen, "Of Civilization and Savages", pp. 407-410.

⁶⁵ House attests that fear of Western intervention, protests and even threats crippled and overturned Japanese foreign policy and domestic projects. The lesson was that in the future Japan had to prepare its plans in secrecy in order to avoid foreign opposition. See *Ibid.*, p. 226.

⁶⁶ Orbach, "By not stopping", p. 52.

plan was abandoned because the proprietors of every suitable area demanded huge compensations for the concession of their land.⁶⁷

The Chinese were informed about the Japanese operation by Wade in April. However, the Zongli Yamen reacted only after the 11th of May 1874, when news of the troops' arrival at Amoy reached Beijing. On that day an official protest was sent to Tōkyō stating among others that Soejima during the previous year did not say anything about an armed intervention; in any case Japan ought to have consulted China before acting. Li Hung-chang suggested on 10 May the immediate dispatch of the director of Foochow Arsenal Shen Pao-chen (1820–1879) to Taiwan immediately with ships and troops to prevent the Japanese from landing.⁶⁸ His plead was endorsed by the throne despite the critical domestic situation of the Qing empire.⁶⁹ Shen was appointed Special Imperial Commissioner with diplomatic and military powers by the Qing emperor on 14 May. In June Yanagiwara initiated negotiations in Shanghai but they soon came to a deadlock.⁷⁰ In Beijing he met with the Ministers of Zongli Yamen during August without much success. P'an Wei, the provisional treasurer of Fukien warned the Japanese envoy that 10,000 Qing troops were on their way to Taiwan.⁷¹ Both sides were immovable to their positions. Yanagiwara was defending his country's legitimate claim to subdue the savages under international law while the Chinese systematically refused to comply with Western law and practices. The Japanese envoy insisted that Beijing had been promptly notified whereas the Ministers asserted their competence and right to manage Taiwan without Japan's assistance. Tension was growing. In the end of July LeGendre departed for South China to enter into negotiations with the Qing Viceroy in Fukien. At Swatow (Shantou) he witnessed in person the Chinese military preparations. Heavy taxes were being levied to the provinces south of Canton to fund the military preparations. In Shanghai and Tianjin, the Chinese were constructing fortifications in case the Japanese attacked.⁷² Upon his arrival at Amoy on August 6 he was arrested by the US marshal stationed at the Amoy consulate in accordance with Bingham's orders but was immediately released.⁷³ In the same time the Japanese were also preparing for war: three new steamers were purchased abroad and the garrison in Taiwan grew up

⁶⁷ House, *The Japanese Expedition*, p. 157.

⁶⁸ On June 15th and 25th Li advised Shen to depart for Taiwan with 13 and 22 battalions respectively to counter the Japanese provocation. Other Chinese officials in June suggested to the court a approach diplomatically the powers for mediation and a modernization program for the army. Most of them recognized Japan's military superiority. See Mizuno, "Qing China's Reaction", pp. 110-111.

⁶⁹ At that moment the revolts in Yunnan and Kansu were quelled and another one was breaking out in Sinkiang province. See Leung, "The Quasi-War", p. 275.

⁷⁰ LeGendre believed that Yanagiwara's early approach was a mistake. Japan required more time to establish a firm position in Taiwan and then it could dictate its terms. See Gordon, "Japan's Abortive Colonial Venture", p. 178.

⁷¹ A force of 11,500 men was assembled in July but reached Taiwan as late as October. See *Ibid.*, p. 180.

⁷² Caruthers, *Charles LeGendre*, pp. 197-209.

⁷³ Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, p. 159.

to 6,000 men. On 8 July 1874 the cabinet decided not to back down even at the risk of war. Capitulation on this issue would be construed as a sign of weakness on the part of the Meiji government. Prime Minister Sanjō stressed that "the Japanese government has decided to go to war, if [it is] unavoidable" and in the same time an imperial proclamation of war to China was drafted.⁷⁴ The Ministers of the Army and Navy were instructed to devise war plans but Yamagata felt pessimistic about the prospect of an engagement. On the 15th Yanagiwara was ordered to explain to the Qing Ministers that: 1) South Taiwan was "truly unclaimed aboriginal territory" and thus Japan's action righteous, 2) the territory would be colonized for humanitarian reasons, 3) if Beijing desired the land seized by the Japanese, it had to compensate them with around 6 million Mexican silver dollars and guarantee its effective governance. The issues of Korea and Ryūkyū were to be addressed by the Japanese envoy but if China desired to settle these issues with war, Tōkyō would be ready to meet it in the battlefield. On 18 July, Iwakura disclosed that Japan would not withdraw even if China explicitly demanded it.⁷⁵ A limited colonial adventure threatened to escalate into a full-scale war. Soejima, Yanagiwara, Sanjō and the Saigō brothers endorsed the prospect of a war to settle every unresolved issue with Beijing. Vice Admiral Shadwell believed that diplomatic rupture was certain since Japan appeared to be establishing a colony instead of abandoning the island. Furthermore, Minister Wade, anxious to prevent a conflict detrimental to the Far East trade, proposed arbitration to both sides. Both Yanagiwara and the Qing authorities refused his proposal.⁷⁶

On 1 May Ōkubo was appointed High Commissioner and Minister Extraordinary. Since he felt responsible for the launch of the mission he wanted to assume negotiations and resolve personally the critical issue by taking Yanagiwara's place. The orders he received the following day were the same with his predecessor's but he was invested with the power to decide on war if he deemed it unavoidable. He arrived at Beijing on 10 September accompanied by LeGendre and the French legal advisor Boissonade.⁷⁷ His plan was to gain recognition for the expedition's legitimacy and an indemnity, which would uphold Japan's prestige, in exchange for the withdrawal from the aboriginal territories. Li favored this arrangement but war seemed still probable.⁷⁸ During September, Ōkubo conferred with Prince Kung. To Kung's claims he replied that the imposition of taxes did not constitute effective control; lack of punitive measures after the aboriginal atrocities against foreign castaways and the Yamen's declarations to Yanagihara in 1873 meant that Japan had

⁷⁴ Gordon, "Japan's Abortive Colonial Venture", p. 179.

⁷⁵ Fox, *Britain and Japan*, pp. 299-300.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 303.

⁷⁷ Boissonade appeared skeptical about the legitimacy of Japanese actions in Taiwan: "If one nation takes the action to civilize the barbarians without first inquiring the intention of the neighboring nation that is adjacent to the barbarian territory, the action is considered inappropriate in diplomatic manners and constitutes a mistaken strategy of the nation." See Chang, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony*, pp. 49-50.

⁷⁸ Mizuno, "Early Meiji Policies", pp. 730-733.

not invaded Chinese territory. If aboriginal Taiwan belonged to China why did Beijing fail to punish the savages that had killed foreign sailors? The Chinese side rejected these arguments pointing out that China had its own gradual system of assimilating its subjects and that this was far older than the Western international law. According to them, Japan had bluntly invaded Chinese territory.

Little progress had been achieved and Wade offered his mediation during the negotiations on 26 September. Ōkubo rejected his offer as did the Yamen the day before. On 5 October Ōkubo threatened to leave Beijing as a means to pressurize his interlocutors. Five days later however he proposed that Beijing established a definite boundary between its domain and the aboriginal area. If the Chinese did not reply in 5 days, the negotiations would be terminated. The boundary proposal was eventually rejected. In the meantime, Ōkubo admitted to Wade and the French Minister Francis Henri Louis de Geofroy (1822-1889), that Japan as an exchange for its withdrawal wished only the vindication of its honour and a monetary compensation. On 18 October, the Yamen Ministers promised to govern the savages and “to pay compensation to these Japanese who had suffered at the hands of the aborigines”. Consequently Ōkubo demanded 3 million Mexican dollars. Beijing’s response was that Japan had only spent 500,000 dollars. The compensation was to be called relief money for the victims’ families and it was to be delivered after the withdrawal of Saigō’s force. On 23 October the Japanese commissioner departed from Beijing in protest: “Japan has no other way but to proceed with her original plan and annex the territory which she now occupies”.⁷⁹

Wade in order to satisfy Ōkubo’s wish for a written assurance for payment rushed to the residence of the Qing Grand Secretary to extract a declaration of the exact amount China would offer. Despite Beijing’s efforts to secure foreign mediation, believing that it would favour its cause, eventually it was Ōkubo that enjoyed the Russian, British and French Ministers’ sympathy. On 25 October the Yamen informed Wade that it was inclined to pay 500,000 taels (750,000 Mexican dollars), 100,000 for the Ryūkyūan victims and 400,000 as compensation for the buildings and roads the Japanese had built in Taiwan.⁸⁰ In addition Ōkubo demanded an official recognition of Japan’s action as righteous. Wade persuaded him to accept half the money in advance and the remaining sum after the evacuation. The dates of the evacuation and of the payment were to be decided later. On 31 October 1874, the Beijing Agreement was signed: Japanese action to “protect its subjects” was deemed legitimate, consolation money was paid to Tōkyō and Beijing promised to keep the aborigines under control.⁸¹ Previous correspondence and records of this issue were discarded by both countries. On 1 November Ōkubo parted for Taiwan to inform Saigō of the termination of his mission. The British diplomatic authorities in both

⁷⁹ Fox, *Britain and Japan*, p. 306.

⁸⁰ Payson J. Treat, “Early Sino-Japanese Diplomatic Relations” in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Mar., 1932), pp. 22-23.

⁸¹ Leung, “The Quasi-War”, p. 277.

countries were relieved and Bingham was likewise pleased for the peaceful settlement of the dispute.⁸²

In order to secure Saigō's cooperation Ōkubo was accompanied by Higashikuze Michitomi (1834-1912) the grand chamberlain, equipped with an imperial edict ordering the evacuation of the island. Before leaving the island on 3 December the commander-in-chief proclaimed to the aborigines that the land was being ceded to the Chinese government in accordance with its request, and he urged both the friendly and the hostile tribes to obey their new masters.⁸³ Saigō and his men were received as heroes in Yokohama amidst festivities by the enthusiastic crowd. On 16 November, Ōkubo and emperor Meiji asked Parkes to thank Wade for his assistance.⁸⁴ In April 1875, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs that had been created the year before to gather intelligence and handle the issue was abolished.⁸⁵ The expedition, the expense of which was initially estimated at 500,000 yen had cost Japan between 7,700,000 and 9,500,000 yen depending on the source.⁸⁶

The modest but humiliating indemnity obtained from Beijing was not the main prize for the Meiji leaders. Japan by organizing a punitive expedition had acted as an imperial power and got away with it. In addition, the Chinese tacitly accepted Japan's claims on the Ryūkyū Islands and its right to intervene in an area under their nominal control. More importantly Tōkyō, despite its susceptibility to foreign pressures, was able to direct the former samurai's aggressiveness away from home and augment its prestige abroad. Furthermore, Japan projected an image of modernity and civilization that sought to convince the West of its distinctiveness vis-à-vis the backward, decaying, and inferior Far Eastern nations. It was the quest for parity not strategic necessities that drew Japan towards war or the establishment of its first colony. Western press praised and acknowledged Japan's "generosity" in surrendering Taiwan back to China and for acting chivalrously for the sake of the whole civilized world. For instance, on 6 December 1874 the *New York Times* suggested about the matter that: "Japan proved itself the honorable and generous nation we now know it to

⁸² Caruthers, "Filibustering to Formosa", p. 452.

⁸³ Caruthers, *Charles LeGendre*, p. 241.

⁸⁴ Ōkubo in February 1875 mentioned to the emperor the benefits of his successful mission: the status of Ryūkyū was clarified, the abuses to the imperial subjects were vindicated, security in those waters was consolidated and Japan's influence was augmented. To these exploits he added the "early recognition by the foreigners that Japan was capable of preserving law and order". Thus a step towards the revision of the unequal treaties was achieved. LeGendre observed that the campaign provided the armed forces with valuable experience. The Qing governor of Foochow was also delighted in a perverse way. He told Wade that the fact that the Japanese lost 800 men due to illnesses was gratifying. However, not everyone was content. The Japanese Navy Minister and Councillor Kido Takayoshi resigned in April in protest to the government's reckless Taiwan policy. See Fox, *Britain and Japan*, p. 309-310.

⁸⁵ House, *The Japanese Expedition*, p. 223.

⁸⁶ Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order*, p. 199.

be”; Japan was “...the youngest member of the family of civilized nations...”.⁸⁷ That was exactly what Meiji leaders longed for.

A positive consequence for China was the eventual recognition of its sovereignty in Taiwan by the foreign powers. At the same time however, Beijing’s slow reflexes and military unpreparedness have been clearly demonstrated. Furthermore, Japan’s adoption of western practices to resolve the issue eradicated Li Hung-chang’s hopes for an Asian alliance to cope with the Western threat.⁸⁸ During the first months of 1875, the Chinese made some vigorous attempts to assume authority over the savages of the interior. In January however, two Chinese were murdered in an aboriginal village in south Taiwan. Beijing after witnessing Japan’s comfortable subjugation of the savages dispatched 500 men to Sai-tao to retaliate. Half of them fell victims to the natives’ guerrilla tactics.⁸⁹ Under Qing rule the island lacked social order and firm administration. Immigrants from mainland China and the aborigines were in a constant conflict as the Chinese were penetrating the interior to secure arable land and exploit the island’s natural resources. The aborigines’ determination to protect their ancestral homes signified a vicious cycle of mutual vendettas, atrocities and warfare. Several dozen official expeditions were organized against the “raw savages” between 1875 and 1895.⁹⁰ 159 sizeable rebellions took place during the period of nominal rule by the Qing. Beijing after almost losing the island in 1874 came to reevaluate its strategic position. Thus, Taiwan’s development and pacification was seen for the first time as an essential part of the Qing broader policy of “self-strengthening”. Shen Pao-chen, the orchestrator of the island’s defence against Saigō’s forces, was the first of a series of Qing governors that sought to erect fortifications, build roads and consolidate Qing rule in Taiwan to prevent further discretions. As a result of another external threat, the French occupation of Keelung and Tan-shui during the Sino-French conflict of 1884-1885, Taiwan was proclaimed a Qing province; previously Taiwan and the Pescadores comprised a prefecture under the jurisdiction of the provincial government of Fukien.⁹¹

⁸⁷ A British reporter sarcastically pointed out that the Japanese some years ago used to murder shipwrecked seamen. Beheading and conquering a feeble barbarian tribe in Taiwan did not automatically mean that Japan was an equal partner of the civilized nations. See Caruthers, “Filibustering to Formosa”, p. 453.

⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 455-454.

⁸⁹ Caruthers, *Charles LeGendre*, pp. 168-169.

⁹⁰ Robert Gardella, “From Treaty Ports to Provincial Status, 1860-1894” in *Taiwan: A New History*, ed. M. A. Rubinstein, (New York-London, 2007), pp. 180-181.

⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 188-191.

11.2 The conquest, administration and function of Japanese Taiwan

Modern Taiwanese history commences with the occupation of the island's southern part by the Dutch East India Company in 1624. Taiwan was known to the West as Formosa (beautiful) a denomination given by passing Portuguese mariners in 1517. The Dutch after overwhelming the Spanish garrisons located in the north, expelled their competitors in 1642 and held the entire island until 1662. In 1644 the Manchu dynasty also known as Qing ousted the Mings and ruled China until 1911. General Cheng Ch'eng-Kung (Koxinga), a Ming loyalist born in Japan, tried to overthrow the Manchus but after a series of defeats he led his troops against the Dutch in Taiwan. In 1662 the Dutch governor surrendered and Cheng established a Chinese type administration sympathetic to the Mings but hostile to the ruling dynasty in Beijing. Eventually the Qings attacked, destroyed and absorbed the defiant Ming stronghold in 1683. Throughout the centuries immigrant waves hailing from Southern China mainly from the Fukien and Kwantung provinces populated the island. The Fukianese known as Hokkien or Hoklos due to their different dialects and customs were distinct from the Hakkas that had inhabited the island long before them (10th century), although ethnically they were both Han Chinese. The larger numbers (70% of the population) of the Hoklos allowed them to expel the Hakkas minority (15%) and obtain the most fertile plains; disputes among them were quite common. After 212 years of rule, Beijing ceded the island to Japan in 1895 as a result of its astonishing defeat during the Sino-Japanese war.

The island's remote interior was the homeland of Taiwan's 9 major aboriginal tribes. The three largest, the Ami, the Paiwan and the Atayal, make up to this day 85% of all aborigines. The more "advanced" tribes were living in the lowland area, paid taxes in kind to Beijing and practiced agriculture whereas the more turbulent "raw savages" survived by hunting in the forests and mountains having minimal contact with the settler society or the imperial state.¹ Tribal conflicts and violent episodes with the Chinese inhabitants and Qing authorities were frequent. Typically, when immigrants mistreated or infringed on aboriginal territory Taiwan's ancient inhabitants ambushed them and in return the Chinese attacked aboriginal settlements. Due to these guerilla actions, many aborigines were killed and others decided to move to the mountains. Qing immigration regulations and the absence of a firm central government in Taiwan led to communal violence and constant uprisings. To eradicate these phenomena Qing officials banned Chinese citizens from penetrating native lands and marked the aboriginal territory by a trenched boundary to restrict the raiding uncivilized savages in the interior. During the last period of Chinese rule, military pacification campaigns and a state policy to gradually civilize the lowland, "less barbarian", "ripe" aboriginals was implemented.²

¹ John Cooper, *Taiwan: Nation-State or Province?*, (Boulder, 2003), pp. 12-38.

² Denny Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History*, (Ithaca-London, 2013), pp. 15-27.

The new Japanese masters of Taiwan in order to justify their presence there and present it as a restoration of their supposedly former rule gave prominence to fictitious or marginal historical facts. After 1895, the 1593, 1609 and 1616 expeditions to the island were suddenly recalled while others claimed that Taiwan was settled by Japanese Wakō pirates and merchants that had to abandon it under the pressure of the Tokugawa seclusion policies in 1628. Thus, the Takasago colony in the northeast coast had been regrettably relinquished.³ Japanese scholars sought to legitimize Tōkyō's possessions historically. In 1930 the author Fujisaki Seinosuke emphasized Taiwan's strong ties and subordination to Japan, a colonial relationship that dated back to Hideyoshi's era.⁴ The same kind of pseudo-scientific rhetoric had been employed to rationalize the seizure of the Ryūkyūs and Korea as well. It goes without saying that the legend of Koxinga, the son of a Japanese mother and the brave hero that fought against the barbarian Manchus and the European imperialists was appropriately exploited.⁵ Koxinga was famous even before the Japanese seizure of Taiwan; during the Tokugawa era, novels, poems, toys, a shrine in Kyōto and 104 plays exalted his loyalty and courage, traits that derived from his Japanese inheritance. A Taiwanese temple in his honour dating from 1662 was elevated to a State Shintō shrine by the colonial authorities in January 1897. This way the deification of Koxinga came to glorify not only the patriotism of a particular samurai but also the virtues of his Japanese mother, virtues that both colonizers and colonized should admire.⁶

Koxinga's descendants briefly returned to the island in 1874 under Saigō Tsugumichi; their second stay lasted from 1895 to 1945. The lack⁷ of preparation and

³ Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History*, p. 12.

⁴ Mark E Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910-1945*, (Washington 2009), p. 73.

⁵ This Japanized model hero was cited during the Pacific War as a reference to Japan's southward expansion against the West and as Hideyoshi's worthy successor. See Marc Andre Matten, "The Japanizing of a Chinese hero: the role of Koxinga in the Japanese colonial discourse" in *Japanizing: The Structure of Culture and Thinking in Japan*, ed. P. Lutum, (Berlin, 2006), pp. 167-176, 186.

⁶ In the beginning of the 20th century the author Kashima Ōkō wrote about Koxinga: "...if his spirit was still with us, he would be pleased that Taiwan now belongs to Japan and that he himself would now be a Japanese hero". At the same time Takekoshi Yosaburō started his momentous work *The Japanese Rule in Formosa* by stating that: "...the island, which China had torn from Koxinga's descendants by intrigue, bribery, and brutal force, passed again into the hands of the Japanese, in whose veins flows the same blood as filled those of Koxinga". The author Yoda Momokawa suggested in 1894 that the island's occupation would ease Koxinga's soul. In the same manner, the famous ultranationalist Tokutomi Sohō celebrated Koxinga's Japaneseness and Taiwan's recovery with a poem published in 1895. See *Ibid.*, pp. 182-185.

⁷ Some historians pointedly refer to Japan's lack of colonial tradition and experience before 1895 to illustrate its confusion on how to administrate its first colony. However, as this research previously demonstrated this kind of imperial tradition, fueled mainly by ancient semi-mythical religious schemes as well as actual facts, was well imprinted in the minds of modern Meiji expansionists. 19th century's Social Darwinism, new imperialism theories, pan-asianism and the civilizing mission complemented Japan's bid for an empire. As for the matter of being experienced in ruling distinct or kin ethnic groups and foreign territories one must not neglect Japan's colonial like rule over the Bonins, the Ryūkyūs and

of definite plans on how to rule Taiwan demonstrates that the seizure of the island was more occasional and opportunistic than meticulously outlined or deliberate. The annexation was a result of the sweeping victory over China and the jingoistic response of the public which encouraged territorial expansion. Both the Meiji leaders and the ecstatic public agreed that Japan for its sacrifices should be rewarded with territorial compensations at China's expense as the other powers had done. Liaodong's retrocession meant that at the very least Taiwan had to be held on at any cost. Navy officers were perhaps the only ones to deem the island as essential for the nation's future security. In the hands of another power it would endanger Japan's position in the Far East and shatter its ambition to expand commercially and politically in the South.⁸ In this sense, early Japanese colonialism was reactionary, a mere precautionary measure to counter forthcoming western encroachment. Prime Minister Itō Hirobumi was convinced and pressed for Taiwan's annexation in the Shimonoseki peace talks. On 10 May, he appointed Admiral Kabayama Sukenori as the first Governor-General in Japan's colonial history. However, it was predominantly the search for prestige, diplomatic pressures and the struggle for equality rather than economic or strategic concerns that led to the decision to annex the island regardless of the subsequent reasonings that were in line with new imperialism's oratories.⁹

The occupation of the Pescadores Islands 30 miles west of Taiwan occurred on 26 March 1895 during the peace negotiations by a Japanese expeditionary force.¹⁰ The Chinese fortified positions in the main islands were bombarded by 9 cruisers and 2 gunboats and then overrun. The whole operation took three days and was completed with minimal casualties.¹¹ Taiwan's capture proved to be more challenging. The fall of the Pescadores chain alarmed Taiwan's population and spread the belief that a Japanese invasion was impending. The Qing governor of the island, Tang Ching-sung (1841-1903) organized fervently the islands fortifications but failed to install a unified chain of command among the various defence units at his disposal. Besides the lack of modern firearms his biggest problem was the unruly behaviour of the Qing troops dispatched from the mainland to assist the local forces in repelling the Japanese. In Taipei on 22 April clashes between the distressed local population and Qing soldiers resulted in 40 dead and wounded for both sides. When the news of the island's

Hokkaidō. The process of devising policies for Taiwan, an "outer territory", as well as its exploitation shared many traits with the administration of these "inner lands".

⁸ One of Ito's advisors suggested at the time: "Taiwan...can control maritime rights in the Yellow Sea, the North China Sea and the Sea of Japan. It is the door to Japan's defense. If we lose this good opportunity, the island of Taiwan will be taken by other powerful countries within two to three years". See Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History*, p. 32.

⁹ Mark R. Peattie, "Japanese Attitudes Towards Colonialism, 1895-1945" in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*, ed. R. Myers, M. Peattie, (New Jersey, 1984), p. 82.

¹⁰ Turnbull White, *The war in the East; Japan, China and Corea: A complete history of the War, its causes and results, its campaigns on sea and land, its terrific fights, grand victories and overwhelming defeats*, (Philadelphia 1895), pp. 651-652.

¹¹ Edward I-te Chen, "Japan's Decision to Annex Taiwan: A Study of Ito-Mutsu Diplomacy, 1894-95" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (Nov., 1977), pp. 64-67.

cession, according to the treaty of Shimonoseki, circulated the population participated in patriotic demonstrations in cities and towns. That same day (April 17) a petition was transmitted to Beijing in protest. The appeal stated that the island's inhabitants felt abandoned by the Imperial Court but were eager to fight and die against the Japanese "Dwarf Chieftains".¹² Two days later the Zongli Yamen informed Governor Tang of the official cession of the island to Japan that was to take place in two months' time. Tang decided to not comply with these orders. The cable also stated that the Taiwanese would be allowed to immigrate to mainland China within two years; those that desired to stay would become Japanese subjects in accordance to the peace treaty. Finally, the Yamen urged the population not to resist the occupation out of fear of Japanese retaliations in the mainland. Besides, the island's remote position was difficult to defend after the fall of the Pescadores and resistance would be a waste of lives and funds for China. Tang warned the westerners residing in Taiwan's ports that riots and violence was imminent and asked them to request their governments' gunboats as a means of preventing the invaders from landing. He even suggested to French and British officials the lease of the island or of its resources so that they would intervene on China's behalf. The retrocession of Liaodong gave Tang hope and in mid-May he approached in secrecy German and Russian officials at first and then Spanish and Americans as well. None of these countries showed any interest. Dishearteningly the sister republic of France did not dispatch its fleet to Taiwan's rescue.¹³ In the meantime many wealthy inhabitants and officials fled to China and outbreaks of disorders became more frequent while mob rule was exercised by local gangs. Li Ching-fang, son of Li Hung-chang, the "traitor" that had agreed to Taiwan's cession, was ordered by the Court on 18 May to visit the island and formally turn it over to Japan. Two days later another communication instructed Tang to order all civil and military staff to evacuate the island. This humiliating decree spurred Tang into action. On 23 May, an announcement by Taiwan's merchants and gentry proclaimed the establishment of the Republic of Formosa in Taipei; on the 25th, Tang was elected its first President and a parliament was formed. The Republic was autonomous but not independent. Tang's mission was to rebuff the Japanese and eventually return the island to China. Since his effort to sell Taiwan failed he believed that a supposedly democratic western type parliamentary administration would attract the Powers' sympathy and recognition. He used his presidential title only with foreign

¹² Chinese animosity towards Japan was still high; For instance, Nanjing's governor in a communication on the 30th of April asked from Tang to "never surrender to Japan". Similarly, Tang wrote to Beijing on 6 March: "I shall encourage all the generals and soldiers to defend until the death". In late April, the British Consul in Tamsui, Lionel Charles Hopkins (1854-1952) was officially informed by the Taiwanese authorities that British rule was preferable to the Japanese one. It seems that Tōkyō chose the least hospitable territory to establish its first colony. See Leonard H. D. Gordon, "The Cession of Taiwan: A Second Look" in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (Nov., 1976), pp. 562-565.

¹³ Harry J. Lamley, "A Short-lived Republic and War, 1895: Taiwan's Resistance against Japan" in *Taiwan in Modern Times*, ed. P. K. T. Sih, (New York, 1973), pp. 255-266.

envoys and he reassured Beijing that he would continue acting as the Qing governor of the island as before.¹⁴

In the meantime, Li's son had transferred Taiwan and the Pescadores to Tōkyō's plenipotentiary Kabayama Sukenori on 2 June in a ceremony that took place on the Japanese ship *Yokohama Maru* offshore the Keelung shore.¹⁵ Chinese military forces, however, defied the agreement and joined the Republic's militia and volunteer Hoklo and Hakka bands, constituting in theory a formidable force of about 100,000 men. The lawless, factious character of the Taiwanese after centuries of uncontrolled, quasi-anarchical way of living was not yet infused with a sense of unifying island patriotism.¹⁶ On 29 May the Japanese Imperial Guards First Mixed Brigade landed southeast of the city in a small village called Audi. Its 7,000 men were deployed from Port Arthur to tropical Taiwan in haste, still in their winter uniforms under the command of Prince Kitashirakawa Yoshihisa (1847-1895). 500 Chinese tried to oppose their disembarkation but were driven off. On the following day four more transports increased the number of the Japanese occupation force to 12,000. In the outskirts of Keelung, Qing forces made a stand in the Kinchu-chang village but were eventually overwhelmed and dispersed. The 2nd battalion of the 1st regiment and a company of engineers under the command of Colonel Kojima captured Keelung on 3 June with the loss of 1 officer, 3 enlisted men, and another 25 wounded. The Chinese lost 250 men. The town was previously shelled by the Japanese fleet led by the admiral Arichi Shinanojō (1843-1919).¹⁷ On the following day news of the defeat reached the Republic's capital Taipei. Tang and his associates fled to the mainland whereas the guard of the city disillusioned and unpaid looted the city's arsenal, burned down the government's seat and attacked civilians. Some of Taipei's inhabitants invited the Japanese troops to restore order in the capital. Thus, on 7 June the city was conquered and the Taiwanese republic was abolished after just twelve days. When the heavily fortified port of Tamsui was captured by a handful of Japanese without firing one shot on 9 June, ending the plunder and riots there, the opposition in the North collapsed.

Itō had hastily designated in an edict the departments that were to rule the colony as early as 8 May 1895, less than a month after Taiwan's cession. These were: Civil Governance, Finance, Foreign Affairs, Production, Military Affairs, Judiciary and Transportation. Kabayama, confident that armed resistance would soon be

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 270-275.

¹⁵ The treaty accorded the previous day was an administrative document that dealt with the inventory of public properties, the expulsion of the Qing troops, and the relocation of political authority over the island. See Gordon, "The Cession of Taiwan", p. 561.

¹⁶ Marco Zagarola, *Taiwan-Formosa: Da Shimonoseki alla fine del Secondo Conflitto Mondiale, 1895-1945*, vol. 1, Ph.D Dissertation, Sapienza University of Rome (1991), pp. 82-88.

¹⁷ James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present: history, people, resources, and commercial prospects: tea, camphor, sugar, gold, coal, sulphur, economical plants, and other productions*, (London-New York, 1903), pp. 291-299.

silenced in the entire island, proclaimed his new government¹⁸ in Taipei, now renamed Taihoku on 17 June. The first provisional¹⁹ administration was set up as follows: the Governor-General's Office was held by himself, the Military Bureau by Major-General Ōshima Yoshimasa (1850-1926), the Naval Bureau would be placed under Rear-Admiral Tsunoda Hidematsu, and the Civil Affairs Bureau under Mizuno Jun (1851-1900). Most of the posts were manned by employees from the Army Ministry. The Military Bureau was subdivided into the Director's Office and the departments of Artillery, Engineering, Gendarmerie Paymaster, Cash, Provisions, Medical, Judicial, Telegraph and of the Post Office. The Civil Affairs Bureau was constituted by the Agricultural and Industrial office, the Financial office both led by Hashiguchi Bunzō while the Educational office was under Isawa Shūji (1851-1917), the Home office under B. Maki and the Foreign Office under H. Shimamura. Taihoku's first prefect was Rear-Admiral Tanaka and the first commissioner of Customs was S. Nomura.²⁰ Due to the anti-Japanese resistance, military rule was proclaimed after 18 July which typically lasted until March 1896.²¹ During the first years of the occupation civil administration existed only on paper since military provisions remained in force.²²

¹⁸ This was the proclamation posted in the city: "His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, having acquired by cession from His Majesty the Emperor of China, under the Treaty of Peace concluded at Shimonoseki, on the 17th day of the 4th month of the 28th year of Meiji, the full and perpetual sovereignty of the Island of Taiwan and the Islands appertaining or belonging thereto, and the Islands composing the Pescadores Group, that is to say, all Islands lying between the 119th and 120th degrees of Longitude east from Greenwich and the 23rd and 24th degrees of North Latitude, together with all fortifications, arsenals, and public property on said Islands. Now therefore, I, Admiral Viscount Kabayama Sukenori, His Imperial Japanese Majesty's Governor of Taiwan, the Pescadores, and their dependencies, have, by Command and in the Name of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, taken possession of the ceded Islands aforesaid, and as His Imperial Japanese Majesty's Governor of Taiwan, the Pescadores, and their dependencies, I have assumed the administration and government thereof. All inhabitants of the ceded territory peacefully pursuing their ordinary and lawful vocations will receive full and constant protection". See Ibid., p. 312.

¹⁹ On 8 August, the Army Ministry reaffirmed this administrative structure this time dropping the word "provisional". On this occasion however, more army and navy officers were employed in the colonial government while the civilian offices were reduced in number. See Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai, *Taiwan in Japan's Empire Building: An Institutional Approach to Colonial Engineering*, (London-New York 2009), p. 53.

²⁰ Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, p. 313.

²¹ Ts'ai, *Taiwan in Japan's Empire*, p. 53. The historian Shinobu Ōe considered the period until March 1896 as the first phase of warfare in Taiwan. The second lasted until 1902 when the Japanese finally managed to quell the main pockets of resistance. The last period ended in 1915 when most of the aborigine tribes residing in the mountainous regions were brought forcefully into submission. Ōe sets the number of Taiwanese and Chinese casualties for the initial phase at roughly 14,000 and for the second period at 17,000. See Shinobu Ōe, "Shokuminchi ryōyū to gunbu. Toku ni Taiwan shokuminchi seifuku sensō no ichi-zuke o megutte" [Colonial possessions and the military: On the historical evaluation of the colonial war of subjugation in Taiwan] in *Teikokushugi to Shokuminchi* [Imperialism and Colonies] ed. A. Yanagishawa, (Tokyo 2001), pp. 68-72.

²² E. Patricia Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan, 1895-1945*, (Cambridge 1977), p. 9.

On 21 June Ōsaka Fourth Division reserves landed on the east coast and captured the main towns of Lotung and I-lan. After the fall of the Republic, a successor state in the far South emerged to carry on the fight against the invaders. General Liu Yongfu (1837–1917) stepped in and became the Republic's leader in the South on 26 June. Making Tainan his state's capital he prolonged the war and the life expectancy of the Taiwan Republic. The colonial government's first task was to pacify the whole island. A direct landing to Tainan, the army's main objective, was out of the question due to the summer monsoon. Hence the Imperial Guards were ordered to assault the enemy's capital by land taking the road along the western coast. Their march southwards had already commenced on 11 June. As they moved deeper in enemy territory they unexpectedly faced a better organized and more vigorous defense. Due to guerrilla activity behind their lines the Japanese troops were forced to halt their march for almost a month. Artillery and the cavalry could not make their way in the interior due to the dense vegetation and the lack of passable roads. After the pacification of the Hsinchu area on 22 June, they were frustratingly bogged down there. The insurgents, mere "brigands" for the Japanese, were attacking the invaders' supply lines, telegraphic poles and wooden bridges. On 10 July, the Hakka militia lost 200 men due to the Japanese attack in Chienbishan city that cost them 11 dead. The next day an even more meaningful and monumental event took place. On 11 July Sergeant Sakurai with 34 men and their provisions left Taihoku for Tokoham but were ambushed by 600 Taiwanese guerrillas. Surrounded by the enemy, Sakurai, according to the legend, motivated his men to "die fighting gallantly". A corporal fighting side by side with his men supposedly exclaimed "Comrades, pardon me that I go before you" and "long live the empire" before leaving his final breath. The remaining committed suicide, sinking their bayonets to each other's chests, to deprive the "brigands" the satisfaction of victory over imperial troops. On 15 July reinforcements from Taihoku caught up with the assailants and avenged the massacre. The Taiwanese militia encouraged by their success were now ambushing Japanese guards and civilians even in the proximity of the capital. These raids prolonged the war, buying time for the local resistance until the Powers' coveted intervention, which was never to come. Similarly, Beijing unable to formally aid the resistance after ceding the island put its faith in Western mediation.²³ The Japanese decided to stiffen their stance and wipe out any opposition in central Taiwan. Several expeditions were dispatched to scatter the guerilla gangs and the armed partisan bands in late July. Villages that formerly flew white flags and posted declarations of submission to Tōkyō when Japanese soldiers passed by, were now considered de facto insurgent bases and were burnt to the ground for their treacherous disobedience. The occupying forces could not easily distinguish between agitators and civilians and willing to set an example they terrorized the entire population.²⁴

²³ Zagarola, *Taiwan-Formosa*, vol. 1, p. 91.

²⁴ Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan*, p. 9.

During the first two weeks of August, a series of battles was fought and the occupation army, reinforced by troops from Taihoku, captured Beipu and Miaoli and other villages in central Taiwan. On 27 August, the battle of Baguashan near Changhua was won by Prince Yoshihisa's approximately 15,000 troops. Central Taiwan was finally pacified. All in all, the Japanese employed a fighting force of 40,983 men with another 20,621 serving in non-combatant roles. Malaria, floods, exhaustion and tropical heat started taking their toll. Only 396 Japanese died in action during the entire campaign; 10,236 had perished from diseases.²⁵ Prince Yoshimasa himself would eventually succumb to malaria.²⁶ From 26 May to 15 November 38,798 cases were directed to the local military hospitals for treatment.²⁷ The Imperial Guards who had been stationed in the battlefield the longest, lost in the process many thousand men by sickness. In need of replenishment and reorganization the unit's 7,000 troops made camp at the city of Changhua. During the opening of the third and final phase of the war the Japanese sought to conquer Yanlin and dispatched scouting detachments further south. On 1 September, these detachments were forced to retreat north due to the locals' stiff resistance. Reinforcements and supplies were gathered and a plan to capture Tainan was devised. On 3 October, the Imperial Guards commenced once again their southward advance and won the battle of Chiayi six days later. In the meantime, the Second (Sendai) Division, which had been assembled at the Pescadores, was preparing to land in the proximity of the Republic's second capital. The 7,200 men of the Ōsaka Fourth Division in the Pescadores would also participate in the southern expedition; Tainan would be attacked by three directions.²⁸ On 10 October, 5,600 men led by Prince Fushimi Sadanaru (1858-1923) landed north of Tainan whereas a slightly larger force under the famous general Nogi Maresuke (1849-1912) headed for Takow. The whole expeditionary force numbered approximately 20,000 men, more than enough to overcome the Republic's defenses. Despite suffering relatively heavy losses the three columns accomplished their goals and gradually approached Tainan. On 18 October, Liu in desperation disguised himself and crossed to the mainland, avoiding arrest only by mere chance. Despite the Republic's capitulation on the 21st, battles against local guerilla bands would continue for the following month. Kabayama, following the cease of the resistance in Tainan, declared on 18 November that Taiwan was pacified in a telegram to the Chief of the Army General Staff in Tōkyō. However, parts of South Taiwan, the central highlands and the east coast were not yet entirely captured. Hakka guerrillas and irregulars would continue to harass the newly installed Japanese authorities for many years to come.²⁹

²⁵ Barclay put the number of fatalities by disease during the campaign at 4,000 and added that another 27,000 had to be hospitalized mostly in Japan. See George W. Barclay, *Colonial Development and population in Taiwan*, (New Jersey 1954), p. 136.

²⁶ Donald Keene, *Emperor of Japan: Meiji and his World, 1852-1912*, (New York, 2002), p. 509.

²⁷ Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, pp. 326-330, 365.

²⁸ Lamley, "A Short-lived Republic", pp. 290-295.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 276-280, 294-295.

Despite the inhabitants' unexpectedly hostile disposition the Japanese finally had placed Taiwan under their control. The Taiwan Affairs Bureau (Taiwan Jimukyoku) set up by Prime Minister Itō on 13 June 1895 (law no. 74) in Tōkyō to supervise Taiwan was abolished the following year. Itō Miyoji (Chief Cabinet Clerk), Kawakami Sarōku (Vice Chief of Staff), Kodama Gentarō (Vice Army Minister), Yamamoto Gonnohyōe (Vice Navy Minister), Hara Kei Takeshi (Vice Foreign Minister), Suematsu Kenchō (Chief of Legislation Bureau), Tajiri Inajirō (Vice Finance Minister), and Den Kenjirō (Chief of Communications Bureau of the Ministry of Communications and Transportation) and the Prime Minister constituted the Bureau. These Ministers and agents lacking colonial experience could not agree on the status of Taiwan; Was it to be ruled as a foreign territory or as a special province like Okinawa and Hokkaidō where assimilation (dōka) was the state's main policy? They turned to foreign experts and advisors from the greatest European empires to find the solution. In 1895 many were not even conscious that Japan had obtained a colony according to the legal scholar Nakamura Tetsu. William Montague Kirkwood (1850-1926) proposed the British model of "association" whereas the French jurist Michel Revon (1867-1947) stood for assimilation, illustrating the conflicting colonial methods of their respective nations. The British and Dutch models were based on indirect rule and the principle of racial apartheid. The French model's assimilation was costlier but the coveted Japanisation of the inhabitants would ensure Taiwan's possession in the long run.³⁰

Kirkwood in his "Opinion paper on the issue of the Taiwan system" submitted on 30 April 1895 to the Ministry of Justice proposed the treatment of Taiwan as a crown colony, as a distinct legal entity institutionally distinct from mainland Japan.³¹ The only common ground with Japan proper would be the subordination to imperial rule rather than to the constitution. In line with his theory he suggested the appointment of a civilian bureaucrat as director of the colony's administration who would operate under Tōkyō's authority, the establishment of an independent policy-making instrument responsible for Taiwan's administration, the creation of a body to legislate distinct and appropriate laws for the colony, and the preservation of the local laws and customs.³² The administration's success would depend on the governor's ability to set up and use a legislative council partially made up by natives; local administration should be left to the Chinese residents while Japanese courts would handle civil appeals.³³ After explaining the specifics of the British Crown's colony system in 7 colonies he concluded that this model suited better Japan's colonial

³⁰ Reo Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition: Colonial Lessons for Contemporary State-building*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, September 2011, pp. 53-54.

³¹ Toyomi Asano, *Shokuminchi Teikoku Nihon no hōteki kōzō* [Legal structure of the Japanese colonial empire], (Tokyo 2004), pp. 37-38. If this proposition was not accepted, Kirkwood further proposed two alternative "relationships" between Taiwan and Japan: federation of conjoined states such as in the American case and incorporation as Britain's Wales and Scotland. See Eiji Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2: Korea, Taiwan and the Ainu 1868-1945*, (Baldwyn North 2017), p. 58.

³² Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, pp. 54-55.

³³ Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation*, p. 71.

administration. In July 1895, he further declared: "The institutions of Taiwan should be decided by the prerogatives of the emperor without the legislative review of the Imperial Diet. It is a legitimate constitutional action. The review of the Imperial Diet is required only when the budget of Taiwan is to be appropriated from the imperial treasury".³⁴

Revon, influenced by France's colonial rationale, believed that Taiwan could be gradually integrated and assimilated to the conqueror's political and cultural sphere. On 22 April 1895, he stated that Japan "should assimilate [Formosa and the Pescadores] as fully as possible, and therefore, [Japan] must plan on making the islands a prefecture of the empire in the future, if not now". Large waves of Japanese immigrants and the imposition of the mainland's legal codes were steps towards assimilation. In order to prevent confusion and unrest in these first crucial steps Japanese civil law should be implemented gradually for the time being. In the future and when Taiwan was completely pacified its judicial integration to Japan's system could be more safely attempted.³⁵ In the same manner, initial administration should initially enjoy some liberty of action but in the long run the island had to be transformed into a "true prefecture" under the government's direct jurisdiction. The pattern of gradual assimilation had precedents in French Africa but more suitably in Hokkaidō (1869) and Okinawa (1879) after their annexation. They were both considered backward territories populated by savages as was the case of Taiwan. For instance, prefectural level elections in Hokkaidō were held in 1901 and in 1912 for the Okinawans; it was as late as 1944 that the Taiwanese were given the right to vote in an effort to embody them fully in the war effort. Conclusively both Revon's and Kirkwood's point of view was that initially, Taiwan should be governed in line with its laws and customs but ultimately its barbarian institution had to be put aside or completely replaced by modern and sophisticated institutions.³⁶

The liberal politician Hara Takeshi (1856-1921) as member of the Taiwan Affairs Bureau evaluated the suggestions of the two foreign advisors. On 2 February 1896, he decided that "Taiwan may have a system slightly different from the main lands, but will not be considered to belong to the colonial type". His ideas included gradual implementation of the mainland's laws, legal and political incorporation into the Japanese structure, assimilation (*naichi enchō shugi* or doctrine of homeland extension) and administration directly accountable to Tōkyō instead to a colonial structure in Taiwan (Taiwan's tax affairs, military and communications would be regulated by the respective ministries in Japan). The last recommendation divided the members of the Taiwan Affairs Bureau. Many found it impractical and costly. Being a native of Japan's northeastern area (Tōhoku), the region that supported the shogunate

³⁴ Lung-chih Chang, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony: Qing and Japanese Sovereignty Debates and Territorial Projects in Taiwan, 1874-1906* Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University Cambridge, (May, 2003), pp. 172-173.

³⁵ Asano, *Shokuminchi Teikoku*, p. 37.

³⁶ Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, pp. 56-57.

and had been defeated, Hara had little chance of winning over the Satsuma, Chōshū, Tosa, Hizen clique that dominated the Meiji government and military after the Restoration. Clan nepotism was partially responsible for the rejection of Hara's proposals.³⁷ Hara retorted that to treat Taiwan as a colony would bring about inconsistency in the metropolis' legislation and could provoke diplomatic problems with the foreign countries.³⁸ As for his assimilation strategy he justified it by calling attention to the geographic proximity and racial affiliation between Japan and Taiwan.³⁹

The everlasting problem of the unequal treaties, so detrimental for Japan's image, and the pursue of nominal equality troubled Hara as well. The abolition of extraterritoriality in Japan with the July 1894 "equal" treaty with Britain was a source of pride and optimism for the Meiji government. According to its provisions, Tōkyō had two years to implement modern western laws. However, in the meantime Taiwan was formally made part of the Japanese territory where the new legal codes had to be applied as well.⁴⁰ Japan's decision not to directly apply modern civil laws in primitive Taiwan could result in the treaty's annulment. The historian Kawashima Shin stressed that the identification of Taiwan as a hindrance to the treaty revisions reveals the Japanese perception of international order at the time and explains their effort to present their colonization effort as a glorious task to the world, a task previously belonging solely to the West. To avoid any contradictions and obstacles during the treaties' revision process Spanish and German diplomats were informed during these talks by the Japanese Foreign Ministry that Taiwan will not become a zone of exclusion but part of Japan. Even if the mainland's westernized laws were not to be eventually applied, Tōkyō at the moment sought to demonstrate that Taiwan belonged to it in diplomatic terms in order to eradicate any foreign interest on the island.⁴¹ The

³⁷ Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, p. 98.

³⁸ The politician Takekoshi Yosaburō and Prime Minister Katsura Tarō in a diet session in 1905 were criticized for using the term colony for Taiwan. The comment that spurred the debate was made by Katsura: "With regard to the question of whether Taiwan is the same as the Japan proper or a colony, it is no doubt that Taiwan is a colony that is different from the homeland". The idea that Japan was imitating the western ravenous powers was "horrifying" to a nation that used to be afraid of western colonialism. Japanese and Taiwanese not only shared cultural and racial traits but also the fear of European colonial domination. This contradictory behaviour, admiration and aversion to colonial practices, partially explains Japan's ambiguous and perplex attitude towards Taiwan (partial application of the constitution, indecision between differentiation and assimilation, confusion on how to run or even call the colony). The Japanese were reluctant to recognize Taiwan as a colony as the term had a negative connotation in western discourse for the Meiji leaders since it implied white exploitation of the African and Asian races; for domestic and diplomatic reasons the term colony (shokumin) was dropped and the term settlement (takushoku) was adopted to describe Taiwan. See Haruka Nomura, "Making the Japanese Empire: Nationality and Family Register in Taiwan, 1871-1899" in *Japanese Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (May 2010), p. 69.

³⁹ Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, pp. 58-59.

⁴⁰ The Governor-General proclaimed on 22 February 1896: "the treaties of commerce and navigation, tariff regulation, and other arrangements existing between Japan and various treaty powers" apply to Taiwan. See Seiji Hishida, "Formosa: Japan's First Colony" in *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Jun., 1907), p. 272.

⁴¹ Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, p. 102.

fear of Western intervention partially prompted Hara and many of the Japanese elite to support the position of assimilation. Direct implementation of the mainland's laws in Taiwan would prove Japan's sovereignty over the island. The American legal advisor to the Foreign Ministry, Henry Willard Denison (1846-1914) believed that Japan should not incorporate conquered peoples into the nation or grant them citizenship rights.⁴² Denison came up with a discriminatory legal system based on the individuals' ethnicity as a solution. Westerners and Japanese in Taiwan were to be subjected to modern civil, commercial and criminal codes whereas the locals would be permitted to follow their own customs for the time being.⁴³ The Taiwanese had been practicing their different laws for centuries and were not ready for the Japanese institutions according to Kirkwood. Thus, Denison advocated the implementation of a new legal code just for Taiwan. In March 1898, Itō contemplated the unequal treaties issue with his trusted advisors. They feared that the fragile Taiwanese colony would be subjected to foreign domination if the westerners were not confined in the island's treaty ports. Ordinance number 8 of the 23rd of June 1898 wholly embraced Denison's recommendation.⁴⁴

The Organic Regulations of the Government of the Governor-General of Formosa (Taiwan Sōtokufu), of November or December 1895 set up the colony's administration. The Governor-General, as in the French, German and British cases, was responsible to the Ministry of Colonial Affairs, established by imperial ordinance 87 in 1896 after the abolition of the Taiwan Affairs Bureau. 16 months later the Ministry was also abolished and its functions were transferred to the new Taiwan Affairs Bureau under the Prime Minister (law no. 295). The Bureau was transformed into an office of the Home Affairs Ministry in February 1898 (law no. 24). In October, it was again abolished and Taiwan was placed under the direct supervision of the Home Affairs Ministry (law no. 259).⁴⁵ The government consisted of the Governor-General's Secretariat, the department of Civil Affairs or Civil Administration Department (Minsei-bu), the Army Department and the Naval staff all under the Governor-General's authority. The Governor of Civil Affairs supervised the administration and finances in Taiwan.⁴⁶ Through several minor departments he

⁴² Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation*, p. 72.

⁴³ Applying one set of legal codes for the Japanese and foreigners and another for the natives meant that the Japanese enforced extraterritoriality in Taiwan. See Toyomi Asano, *Teikoku Nihon no shokuminchi hōsei: hōiki tōgō to teikoku* [The Legal System of the Japanese Empire: The Integration of Legal Domains and Imperial Order], (Nagoya 2008), p. 106.

⁴⁴ Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, pp. 60-62.

⁴⁵ Noboru Asami, *Japanese colonial government*, (New York 1924), pp. 13-14.

⁴⁶ Taiwanese finances were provided for by two accounts: the special accounts adopted in 1899 and the local tax accounts in 1898. The annual revenue for the special accounts came from Tōkyō subsidies and the colonial government's income. These funds were used to manage the administration's expenses. The goal was to increase the revenue, gradually decreasing the central government's financial commitment so that the colony could gain its fiscal autonomy. The local taxes revenue came from taxes on property, business, rentals, land and other miscellaneous taxes. Business revenues were divided among the heads of the Railway, Monopoly, Civil Engineering Bureaus as well as the chiefs of the prefectures and the head of the Customs House. Local taxes defrayed expenses for local administrative

controlled the colony's finance, education, communication, commerce and industry, public works, railways, monopolies, customs, surveys and general affairs. The last branch was subdivided into four offices: domestic affairs, foreign affairs, legislation and education.⁴⁷ The Army Department was made up by the General Staff, the Administrative Staff, the Judicial Section, the Intendance Corps, the Medical Corps and the Veterinary Corps. The Naval Staff was subdivided to the Chief Staff Officer, Administrative Staff Officer and the Naval Interpreters.⁴⁸

The Governor-General was given the rank of shinmin, the highest of the four bureaucratic grades in Japanese officialdom. In this way, they enjoyed the same privileges of protocol as the Prime and Cabinet Ministers and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in Tōkyō. They came from the military: The ranks of general, admiral, lieutenant general and vice-admiral were eligible for the post. Hara Takashi pushed in vain for civilian administrators under the direct supervision of the central government instead. A military oriented colonial administration meant that army leaders would have a bigger say in Taiwan than the diet in Tōkyō. The uprisings and the continued local guerilla warfare in the island however, seemed to justify the successive appointments of Governor-General from the ranks of the military from 1895 to 1919 when the system was abolished.⁴⁹ This study will examine the activities of the first four Governor-Generals: admiral Kabayama Sukenori (10 May 1895-2 June 1896), lieutenant general Katsura Tarō (2 June 1896-14 October 1896), lieutenant general Nogi Maresuke (14 October 1896-26 February 1898) and lieutenant general Kodama Gentarō (26 February 1898-11 April 1906).⁵⁰ If we exclude Kodama the average length of tenure was two years and one month, too short to gain a deep knowledge of the island's conditions.⁵¹

and government offices (education, police, civil works, sanitation, repairs) and were collected by the chief of every prefecture. The budget for revenue and expenditures under the local taxes account was prepared by the chief of Civil Affairs taking into consideration the estimate of apportioning expenses for each prefecture. In December 1896, the Central Treasury was established in the colony's capital and branch offices were set up in 6 other towns. See SOAS Presbyterian Church of England Foreign Missions Committee Archive (henceforth cited as PCE-FMC), series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, pp. 24-26.

⁴⁷ Hishida, "Formosa: Japan's First Colony", p. 269.

⁴⁸ SOAS PCE-FMC, series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, p. 11.

⁴⁹ The historian Atsushi Yamada made the argument that in fact the army had dominated the colony until 1919. From 1919 until 1936 civil administration superseded the rule of the military. During the final period of the Japanese presence in Taiwan, from 1936 to 1945, the military rule and the civilian administration were merged or interchangeable. See Atsushi Yamada, *Nihon no Chōsen, Taiwan shihai to shokuminchi kanryō* [Japanese rule and bureaucracy in Korea and Taiwan], (Kyoto 2009), p. 43.

⁵⁰ Edward I-te Chen, "Japanese Colonialism in Korea and Formosa: A Comparison of The Systems of Political Control" in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 30 (1970), pp. 127-128.

⁵¹ Andrew J. Grajdanzev, *Formosa Today: An Analysis of the Economic Development and Strategic Importance of Japan's Tropical Colony*, (New York 1942), p. 161.

The Governor-Generals were given almost unlimited powers in ruling the colony in order to pacify it. For some members of the diet this semi-independent dictatorship was an emergency and a temporary measure.⁵² The Governor-Generals had the command of the colonial garrison. Furthermore, they had the authority to "control general political affairs"; to "control officials under [them]"; to "command the military and naval forces" and the right to issue executive ordinances carrying the same effect as the laws of Japan. As Shinmin they answered directly to the Emperor for their colonial and administration policies.⁵³ However, the Organic Law of 1897 made clear that "in controlling general political affairs of Formosa, the Governor-General shall accept supervision from the Premier." The imperial ordinances No. 86 and No. 9 of 1896 and 1897 respectively somewhat limited their authority. For matters concerning finance, banking, customs, mail and telegraphic services they were held responsible to the Finance Minister and the Minister of Correspondence.⁵⁴ Taiwan's Governor-General held the power to cancel any decision of the provincial governors and dismiss or appoint officials of the lowest rank. If he was able to obtain imperial approval he could even impose penalties upon the higher-level bureaucrats. According to article 4 paragraph 1 of the 1897 organic law: "He shall accept the direction of the Ministers of Army and Navy in matters concerning military and personnel administration of enlisted persons". Paragraph 3 asserted: "He shall accept the direction of the Chiefs of Staff of the Army and of the Navy in matters concerning the island's defense and mobilization projects" and "He shall obey the commands of the Inspector-General of Military Education in matters relating to military education". Finally, article 7 paragraph 2 specified that "He shall report to the Ministers of Home Affairs, Army and Navy and the Chiefs of Staff of the Army and the Navy when he decides to use the colonial garrison for the maintenance of public order".⁵⁵

The Governor-General possessed legislative authority as well. He was authorized to enact executive ordinances that concerned administrative affairs called *furei*, prefecture orders called *shūrei* and subprefecture orders called *chōrei*. Any infringement to the *furei* gave to the Governor-General the right to impose a fine of 200 yen or imprisonment of up to one year without resorting to a judicial court. The second kind of ordinances according to the "Law relating to Laws and Ordinances to be enforced in Formosa" for which imperial approval was required, through the Prime Minister, was called *ritsurei* (administrative orders with legal effect). These orders had the same effect as laws in Japan proper. The Governor-General could enforce any mainland law as he saw fit, through an imperial ordinance, bypassing the diet. In addition, the *ritsurei* were duly approved by the Consultative Council (*Hyōgikai*).

⁵² A British voyager in Taiwan wrote in his 1904 book *The Japanese in Formosa* that Japanese rule was "based on the model of our Crown Colony administration". He concluded that Tōkyō espoused the British pattern of colonial rule, but in a more militaristic and authoritarian way. See Takeshi Komagome and J. A. Mangan, "Japanese colonial education in Taiwan 1895-1922: precepts and practices of control" in *History of Education*, 26:3 (1997), p. 311.

⁵³ Yamada, *Nihon no Chōsen, Taiwan*, p. 43.

⁵⁴ Chen, "Japanese Colonialism in Korea and Formosa", pp. 132-133.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 134-135.

This was not a decision-making instrument and was consisted entirely of Japanese officials, mainly naval and army officers, presided by the Governor-General.⁵⁶ He was the only one with the authority to propose, withdraw and amend bills. The Council's members were: The Governor of Civil Affairs, the heads of the military departments, the chiefs of all bureaus, the chief justice and the public prosecutor-general of the court of appeals, two counselors or legal advisors and three bureau members. Besides approving the laws of the colonial administration, the Hyōgikai addressed financial and public works related issues.⁵⁷

The broad legislative powers, mainly in the form of the *retsurei* (decrees as laws) ordinances, entrusted to the Governor-General to maintain social order after Taiwan's occupation were challenged by the diet. The diet was the only law-making institution in accordance with the Japanese constitution of 1889. The Meiji Constitution did not contain any provisions in regard to colonial annexations in the empire. The inland's political condition, the population's hostility and the notion that Taiwan's traditions and customs were completely different from those prevailing in Japan brought about the Governor-General's investment with extraordinary powers. In March 1896, Law no. 63 was approved by the diet with the provision that its enactment would be a temporary measure; its duration was set for three years.⁵⁸ Therefore, the diet's legislative powers were bypassed and the constitution was only partially applied⁵⁹; some Japanese laws would be selected and imposed. Law 63 was put in effect again in 1899, 1902 and 1905 despite the liberals' objections on the constitutionality of the proposed legislation. The liberal parliamentarian Takata Sanae (1860-1938) was among those deputies who objected. Mizuno Jun (1851-1900) Taiwan's first Governor of Civil Affairs from 1895 to 1897 replied in the Lower House: "The entire Constitution cannot be applied in Formosa. On the contrary, the Government proposes to exercise sovereignty as far as possible on the basis of the Imperial prerogative. The provisions of Chapter Second of the Constitution cannot be enforced to Formosa. Hence the Government declares that legislative matters delegated to parliament in the motherland are to be dealt with in Formosa by orders of the Governor-General in accordance with powers delegated to him by general law". The government was unwilling to discuss further the law's constitutionality and in later years pointed out that the law has already passed and was now a legal precedent.⁶⁰ In 1897 the scholar Ume Kenjirō (1860-1910) proposed that the rights of

⁵⁶ Shodō Kō, *Taiwan sōtokufu* [The government-general of Taiwan], (Tokyo 1981), p. 223.

⁵⁷ Chen, "Japanese Colonialism in Korea and Formosa", p. 136.

⁵⁸ Takeshi Komagome, *Shokuminchi teikoku Nihon no bunka tōgō* [Cultural integration in the Japanese colonial empire], (Tokyo 1996), p. 33.

⁵⁹ Partial application of the constitution meant in practice that the Taiwanese were Japanese because they were ruled by the emperor but were not Japanese in terms of their rights and obligations. Tōkyō's confusion is attested to by the fact that in June 1898 the government finally decided to enforce the constitution and the reformed treaties in Taiwan with an unilateral secret order. See Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, pp. 108, 116.

⁶⁰ Asano, *Shokuminchi Teikoku*, p. 39.

the Japanese citizens should be extended to the Taiwanese as well because Imperial rule was based on impartiality and justice.⁶¹ Law professors and constitutionalists such as Hozumi Yatsuka (1860-1912) argued that the constitution should be enforced in its fullest in Taiwan whereas others like Mitsue Ichimura (1875-1928) were against its application. Finally, the scholar Tatsukichi Minobe (1873-1948) proposed the constitution's partial implementation.⁶² For financial matters and the revision of laws the Governor-General was required "to ask the Diet for opinion". The controversial Law 63 was eventually superseded by Law 31 in 1906. Thus, the *ritsurei* were restricted only to issues not yet covered by the law. Furthermore, they could not be conflicting with laws in Japan proper that had been issued by means of imperial ordinances and were applicable also in Taiwan or with laws proclaimed especially for the colony.⁶³

Due to the prolonged resistance, the Governor-General and his staff were granted in 1896 considerable authority. Thus, they proceed unhindered in imposing a military and not a civilian rule in the colony. Every Governor-General who was by definition closely associated with the ranks of the army did not feel that he had to conform to Tōkyō's directives. The central government promoted the policy of assimilation of the Taiwanese but the military, having other priorities, set forth its own political agenda. Concurrent implementation of assimilationist and "differentiation" policies resulted to a complicated and contradicting legal framework for the island's inhabitants.⁶⁴ Itō Hirobumi's plan of the 21st of May 1895 intended to place the Governor-General's authority under the planned Taiwan Affairs Bureau. Furthermore, Hara's pleads for a civilian Governor-General's were vetoed by the Vice Chief of Staff, Kawakami Sōroku on the grounds that the army needed freedom of action to suppress the rebels. The Army and the Navy Ministers had the power to bring down the government if one of them decided to resign; according to the law these posts had to be filled by active officers. Kawakami even ignored the emperor's preference for civilian administration in Taiwan stated in late August 1897. Some scholars argued that party politics and Tōkyō's constant interference may have led to destabilizing consequences in the colony. The promulgation of Law 63 was a field of power struggle and a victory of the military at the expense of the civil administration and the diet. In Japan where the military had a preponderant political status and an overbearing influence upon the society, the Governor-Generals and his associates, hailing from the army, were immune to possible criticism and pressures by the liberal deputies in the diet.⁶⁵ Ranking army and navy officers' in the colony saw the

⁶¹ Komagome and Mangan, "Japanese colonial education", p. 312.

⁶² Noboru Asami, *Japanese colonial government*, (New York 1924), pp. 32-33.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 40

⁶⁴ Yūzō Yamamoto, *Nihon shokuminchi keizaishi kenkyū*, [An economic study of Japan's colonies], (Nagoya 1942), p. 3.

⁶⁵ Meitetsu Haruyama, "Kindai Nihon no shokumin tōchi to Hara Takeshi [The Colonial Administration of Modern Japan and Hara Takeshi] in *Nihon shokuminchi shugi no seijiteki tenkai* (1895-1934) [The Political Development of Japan's Colonialism, 1895-1934], (Tokyo, 1980), p. 39.

Governor-Generals as patrons and colleagues. These close relations meant that the military held many of the offices of the colonial government and exerted great influence over domestic matters. Every Governor-General vigorously guarded his autonomy in Taiwan. From 1896 to 1915 the post was occupied strictly by Chōshū men. The General Staff saw Taiwan as its private outpost, as a great opportunity to act without civilian restrictions and implement its belligerent and expansionist aims. The island's pacification and transformation into a military foothold was the first step towards the subjugation of South China and the South Seas.⁶⁶

The Governor-General also had the power to establish or abolish courts in the colony and to appoint or dismiss public persecutors and judges. He also had the authority to suspend a judge or reduce his salary considerably. Thus, the judiciary was subordinated to the executive. The actual administration of the law was at the Governor of Civil Affairs' hands. In May 1896, a Supreme Court (Hōto Hōin) and a court of appeals were set up in the capital Taihoku, the seat of the colonial government. This measure was followed by the establishment of local courts in fifteen districts, each one equipped with public prosecutors. No channels of appeal to the Supreme Court in Tōkyō were made available. The court system employed in Taiwan had nothing to do with the one in metropolitan Japan. Another controversial matter erupted in the diet this time on whether colonial courts should be treated as ordinary courts, similar to the mainland ones, or as special courts in a special territory. In line with the ritsurei 16 issued on 19 July 1898 three district courts (chōhō-hōin) and a court of appeals (fukushin-hōin) were inaugurated in Taiwan. The latter had a civil and criminal division each presided by three judges. The district courts were also divided to civil and criminal branches and had the competence to examine preliminarily criminal cases. In the first 20 years of the Japanese occupation the colonial government, facing budgetary limitations, did not appoint many legal professionals and did not spend funds to bolster Taiwan's judiciary. In 1898 any person qualified to be an attorney was authorized to act as one. In 1900 the Regulation of Formosa Relative to Practicing Attorneys, identical to the law in force in Japan, was issued. From 1901 these agents were required to be registered in the official attorneys' list.⁶⁷

The case of the First Chief Justice of the High Court of Taiwan, Takenori Takano⁶⁸ is enlightening. Takano was conducting a prosecution involving high

⁶⁶ Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, pp. 72-73.

⁶⁷ Hishida, "Formosa: Japan's First Colony", p. 270.

⁶⁸ Takano's views on Taiwan's value are interesting. In 1896 he wrote: If one goes along with what petty officials believe, our Empire's possession of Taiwan will not be effected by means of profit-centered colonialism, (but will lie in) gradually Japanizing the populace of that land-in other words, by filling that realm with the popular sentiments of loyalty and patriotism, and making it serve as a worthy protective barrier in the Empire's south-west". If Taiwan was considered by the metropolis a "profit bearing colony as in Britain's India or Spain's Philippine Archipelago, then it might be permissible to

officials in the colonial administration under suspicion of corruption. He also criticized the military police's cruel methods. Governor-General Nogi, willing to silence any scandalous rumours and considering Takano's actions as civilian meddling in his rule, attempted to oust him. Takano was recalled to Tōkyō where some cabinet Ministers tried to convince him to desist from his investigation. When he declined they ordered him to retire in October 1897. Takano claimed that he was free from executive interference under article 58 of the constitution (judges were immune to dismissal or involuntary transfer)⁶⁹ but his removal was explained on the grounds that Taiwanese courts were not ordinary courts and in any case, they were outside of the constitution's area of jurisdiction. Takano rejected their bidding as illegal and returned to his post in the colony.⁷⁰ The day before the corruption case was to be tried, 16 police officers and constables arrested him in the courthouse. The majority of the judges in Taiwan supported him but could not overrule Tōkyō's and the colonial government's decision. The application of the constitution and the protection of judges to Taiwan became again a heated debate in Prime Minister Matsukata's cabinet. In July 1897, the colony's Supreme Court was temporarily abolished. The opposition and some cabinet members supported Takano's case and harshly attacked the government in December. Matsukata resigned in January 1898. Takano asked the next Prime Ministers Ōkuma and Itō for his moral exoneration and he further appealed to various courts but in vain.⁷¹

The first colonial laws were nothing more than punishments copied from the military code of justice for the rebels. Military tribunals with extraordinary authorities were hastily established;⁷² the first was set up in November 1895 in line with the Regulation regarding the Organization of the Taiwan Governor-General Courts. According to the Dispositions for Taiwanese Military Criminals the penalty was always death. However, few insurgents were actually put to trial. Most of them were hurriedly executed. Only 41 of 345 criminal cases in the tribunal involved the offense of rebellious activities between November 1895 and 31 March 1896. The Penalty Order for Inhabitants of Taiwan (ordinance no. 4) made the provisions of the army and navy criminal law during wartime applicable to cases of homicide, rape and robbery without the right of appeal. It was succeeded by the 1898 Bandit Punishment Law, a particularly harsh law whose aim was to terrorize the "bandits" into submission. Takano demonstrated sympathy for the guerilla fighters; many of them were not persecuted during his tenure in 1896-1897. In 1897 district courts imposed death on only 54 out of 526 rebel cases. The police were so corrupted that its members extorted money from the Taiwanese in order to not charge them with made

ignore the natives' human rights", but if the Taiwanese were to become loyal subjects they had to be treated with respect. See Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, p. 67

⁶⁹ Asano, *Shokuminchi Teikoku*, p. 42.

⁷⁰ Chen, "Japanese Colonialism in Korea and Formosa", p. 140.

⁷¹ Marie Seong-Hak Kim, *Law and Custom in Korea: Comparative Legal History*, (New York, 2012), p. 163.

⁷² Asano, *Shokuminchi Teikoku*, p. 41.

up crimes. The official report entitled “Actual conditions in Taiwan” presented some time in 1896 to Prime Minister Matsukata admitted that the Japanese military: “violently abused the native inhabitants, struck them without reason, forced them to sell their goods at a low price; or, in the name of requisition, seized their goods, occupied their houses and ancestral halls; or arbitrarily suspecting them (of some crime), arrested natives and slaughtered them”. Destruction of temples and schools, excavation of tombs, disdain of local customs was not a part of an assimilation policy but random violence.⁷³ Early in 1897 Chief Justice Takano accused the Japanese police of arresting and torturing inhabitants arbitrarily. The only civil law of the initial period of the Japanese occupation was the Civil Litigation Order for Inhabitants of Taiwan. This stressed the employment of local customs to resolve lawsuit cases, without the right of appeal. No civil law was applied until July 1898 (ritsurei no. 8 of 1898 enforced the Civil, Commercial and Criminal Law).⁷⁴

Before the capture of the island in 1895 Qing codes and customary law were in effect. The former concerned family matters, loans and land transactions. The latter such as the Yeh-chu, the Yung-tien, the Ti-chi, the Tien Pledge, and the T'ai mostly regulated old land ownership issues. Due to the absence of a Chinese central administration the Taiwanese were accustomed to solving their differences by themselves. In 1899, trials in Taiwan were aligned to the Japanese penal codes that in turn were adopted from the western style legal systems. In this sense, the modernization of the Japanese society in western terms was duplicated on another “backward” Asian society that until then had been influenced by Chinese practices. Of course, not every aspect of enlightened legislation was put in practice; for example, suffrage only existed in the metropolis and not in the colony. Conscription was not implemented as it would bring the untrustworthy Taiwanese into the ranks of the military.⁷⁵ The Meiji legislators believed that an outright application of Japan’s westernized legal system in Taiwan was not possible due to the island’s particular conditions.⁷⁶ Besides the furei and ritsurei ordinances, legislation in Taiwan can be subdivided into further categories: “Legislation of Emergency” according to Article 8 of the 1889 Japanese constitution and “Supplemental or auxiliary Legislation” promulgated by the colonial police for the punishment of offenders. Lastly international treaties like the unequal treaties had to be observed in Japan’s colony as well. Taiwan from 1895 to 1922 was ruled via special legislation and regulations; from that point on and until 1945 most Japanese laws were directly enforced on the colony in what Caroline Ts’ai describes as “extension of Japan proper”. The central government’s power in Taiwan was limited to appointing and removing Governor-

⁷³ Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, p. 44.

⁷⁴ Tay-sheng Wang, *Legal reform in Taiwan under Japanese colonial rule (1895-1945): the reception of western law*, (Seattle, London, 2000), pp. 45-46, 106-107.

⁷⁵ Oguma points out that the constant fear of a western invasion or an uprising in Taiwan demonstrates Japan’s lack of confidence in its military force. See Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, p. 63

⁷⁶ Wang, *Legal reform*, pp. 63, 75, 146-149.

Generals, promulgating imperial ordinances, bureaucratic organization, approving laws issued by the Governor-Generals and authorizing the colony's budget and the Finance Prosecuting Office's right of inspection. The historian Takekoshi Yosaburō correlated the Governor-General post with the colonial system implemented in French Indochina: the Viceroy was above the law, controlled the military and civilian affairs and in case of need he could declare martial law.⁷⁷

The Governor-General's ordinances were imposed to the people through local administrators, governors, mayors or even village leaders in line with the Organic Regulations of the Local Governments (*Sōtokufu Chihōkan Kansei*) of March 1896. Local administration was divided in 3 prefectures-provinces (*Chō* or *Shū*) and 3 sub-districts; in municipalities and counties (*Shi* and *Gun*) and finally towns and villages (*Gai* and *Shō*).⁷⁸ The province was ruled by the provincial governor (*Shū-chiji*) or by the district governor (*Chō-chō*). They enforced the central government's laws, had the authority to devise their own, supervised local affairs and administrated their respective zones of authority. They were assisted in their task usually by a Secretariat, the Department of Civil Administration, and a Provincial Police Headquarters. A council presided by the *Shū-chiji* and made up by lower officials and the most illustrious residents of each province was more decorative than functional. In case military force was needed the provincial governors had to request the Governor-General's approval beforehand. In case of emergency however they could ask directly the regional commanding officer to employ his troops. Violation of the provincial governor's orders entailed imprisonment of up to two months or a fine of up to 70 yen. *Ritsurei* No. 3 of 1904 provided that these governors could arbitrate civil disputes within their area of jurisdiction. *Gun* was run by the *Gun-shu* and *shi* by the *shi-chō*, or mayors. The mayors were also the heads of the *Shi* council, an advisory organ that made administrative recommendations to the central government. It also promulgated municipal orders and regulated the municipality's taxes and budget. Its members were mainly selected among the most prominent locals by the Mayor. The *Shi* and *Shū* councils were not decision-making institutions since they were completely dominated by Japanese officials and their decisions needed the approval of the central colonial authorities anyway. Lastly the towns' and villages' elders ought to assist their superiors in their executive administrative tasks. The majority of the headmen were Japanese. A fraction of these positions was entrusted to the Taiwanese and then only to those that had been educated in Japan. *Shō* was subdivided in *Ho* and *Kō*, the last level of local administration in Taiwan. The *Ho-Kō* system was exclusively manned by locals as we will see later. Police departments were erected in each of the *Shū*, *Shi*, *Gun*, *Gai* and *Shō* and these police stations had even smaller

⁷⁷ Ts'ai, *Taiwan in Japan's Empire*, pp. 16-30.

⁷⁸ Due to the lack of funds and the shortage of qualified officials the township offices were not adequately staffed. In the summer of 1898 a new reform sought to improve the manning of rural and urban offices of the local administration. See Ching-Chih Chen, "The Japanese Adaptation of the Pao-Chia System in Taiwan, 1895-1945" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (Feb., 1975), p. 403.

branches scattered in every corner of the colony. In 1897 the prefectures were increased to 6 with three district offices with general offices, police offices and industrial (exploitation) offices subordinated to them. The following year the prefectures were again reduced to 3 and 4 district offices.⁷⁹ Between 1895 and 1909 the first five governor-generals altered the formation of prefectural and district administrations 8 times. These revisions and the constant reshuffling of personnel proved the confusion and the lack of a definite colonial policy.⁸⁰

The colonial state almost from the start approached the wealthy and influential Taiwanese in an effort to utilize their social influence to ease Japan's rule over the island's population. Considering the inhabitants' fame, property and willingness to cooperate the Japanese employed them in lesser administrative positions. By doing so the new rulers redistributed the resources of authority. However in some cases, especially during the first phase of the colonial dominion, aspects of traditional social structure were maintained as auxiliary to Japan's still precarious rule.

After the occupation, some gentry, merchants and scholars decided to collaborate with the new rulers. Many of them however, in order to escape the advancing occupying forces and later to avoid the "dwarf" domination fled to China. Voluntary submission on the part of gentry and scholars signified a privileged and enhanced role in the new established colonial society. On 21 June 1895, some of I-lan region's literati hailed the Japanese army as protectors of peace and order in the island by hanging banners that welcomed the troops. Similar incidents took place in many town and villages throughout Taiwan especially in July and August. The island's literati not familiar with the Japanese language tried to find employment in teaching or medicine. However, the western style medicine and modern schooling put forward by the rulers brought about the economic deprivation of this influential social class. Suspicions about their anti-Japanese activities eliminated the privileged status that they had enjoyed during the Qing era. However, many of the literati either collaborated or demonstrated indifference for the new regime.⁸¹

In the beginning the Japanese relied upon the more familiar Qing institutions for administering Taiwan. Right from the start they utilized the system of town and village headmen to approach the inhabitants. Early in 1895 the gentry of the colony's capital asked permission by the Japanese authorities to hold public meetings and to establish some kind of local bureaus to protect the law-abiding citizens from the attacks of partisans and Japanese alike that molested women, seized property and mistreated the loyal people of the communities. Some kind of local organization was needed amidst this uncertain and unsettling initial period. On 8 August, the first pao-

⁷⁹ SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, p. 12.

⁸⁰ Chen, "Japanese Colonialism in Korea and Formosa", pp. 141-150.

⁸¹ Harry J. Lamley, *The Taiwan Literati and Early Japanese Rule, 1895-1915: A Study of Their Reaction to the Japanese Occupation and Subsequent Responses to Colonial Rule and Modernization*, Ph.D Dissertation University of Washington, 1964, pp. 211-217, 313-314.

liang chu bureau was created with the goal of maintaining order, redressing grievances and working for the public interest. If the initial period of operation bore fruits, the colonial state would then assume its funding and eventual expansion elsewhere. In late September, the central pao-liang chu was awarded its first funding. The upper class members that managed the branches were granted some privileges and had to report to the Governor-General government. In exchange, the merchants and upper-class members signed statements of loyalty and promised to abide by the Japanese rules. Twenty branch offices mushroomed in the following months until the end of the war. The Japanese by collaborating with the local elites gathered information about the rebels' hideouts, placated the most influential part of the population and made a step towards the consolidation of their power. On 19 October 1896, a similar association called Shen-shang hsieh-hui or Shinshō Kyōkai in Japanese was set up in Meng-chia by Taiwanese merchants with the goal of promoting economic development and association between colonizers and colonized. Financial difficulties and the end of the war made the existence of these offices obsolete. The ties established with the elites during this troublesome era were not entirely disrupted. Many of the pao-liang chu collaborators were appointed as minor functionaries, interpreters, clerks, and local government advisors (sanji). For example, Lin Yao-t'ing after welcoming the Japanese troops in his town Taichū (Taichung) in August 1895 advanced to honorary positions such as councilor and supernumerary of the town's court. Yang Chi-ch'en, ex member of the pao-liang chu office, was awarded the right to sell opium in his district in 1897. The scholar Shintarō Shirai during the period 1896-1899 negotiated the terms of the rebels' surrender in central Taiwan through the assistance of the local literati. When in March 1900 the police arrested some innocent villagers in Northern Taiwan the local elites helped to diffuse the situation. This episode demonstrates that these collaborators were acting as intermediates between the police and the villagers, between Taihoku and the general population that is.⁸²

The first three governor-generals concentrated their attention on how to give an end to the endless guerilla warfare that embarrassed and endangered Japan's initial colonial undertaking. Despite the declaration of civil rule in the island in March 1896, its administration remained preponderantly military oriented.⁸³ The colony was practically under constant martial law. Until 1898, when competent colonial magistrates took over, no sound administrative base or long-term civil policies were formed. Tōkyō faced with the stubborn rebels, financial limitations and the unsettling watchful eye of the westerners was struggling to retain control. After three years of

⁸² Lamley, *The Taiwan Literati*, pp. 225-230, 336-342.

⁸³ Military features were paramount in their administrations in what was essentially a system of military rule. See Hyman Kublin, "Taiwan's Japanese Interlude, 1895-1945," in *Taiwan in Modern Times*, ed. P. K. Sih, (New York 1973), p. 319.

continuous insurrection, scandals⁸⁴ and rapid turnover of incompetent Governor-Generals, Japan's colonial experiment in Taiwan seemed destined to fail.

Kabayama's rule was marked by the war of occupation and the constant violence it brought in Taiwan. Stubborn resistance, ambushes and diseases due to the island's tropical and inhospitable environment account for the Japanese frustration and atrocities. Terror was seen as an instrument to instill awe and fear and also to provide a stern warning to the locals that fighting back or assisting the insurgents was futile. Between 16 and 22 June 1896, 30 villages (4,295 houses) were burned to the ground as a response to a revolt that had broken out in Yunlin in central Taiwan.⁸⁵ A contemporary witness affirmed: "During the punitive campaign, the number of bandits, implicated persons and suspected persons killed was considerable, and private houses destroyed by fire actually exceeded three thousand". In July, the Governor-General in order to quell the resistance requested persistently and received reinforcements from Tōkyō.⁸⁶ Kabayama was also suspicious of the conservative pro-Chinese literati and gentry in Taiwan, whom he believed to be inciting anti-Japanese feelings. The cruel treatment only managed to stiffen resistance to the conquerors. Denison, who was in Taiwan at the time, provided some fragments of the rebel leaders rhetoric: "...all must pay tribute to the Japanese, that not even the pig, dog, cat, goose, or chicken would be exempt from taxation; and that the Chinese should not close their doors against the Japanese, but give freely to the conquerors of all they had, even to the women [sic], who should be placed at the disposal of the soldiers".⁸⁷ On 24 June 1896, Kabayama prohibited the acceptance of gifts by the colonial officials. This practice was widespread during the Qing period but the new rulers strived to prove their moral superiority compared to the oppressive and corrupted Chinese. Discrediting the previous regime in a constant and prejudiced way was a method to highlight the benefits of Japan's impartial, benevolent and generous rule. At the end of 1895 Mizuno Jun tried to show the difference between the political cultures of Japan and China. When rumours about an impending bandit attack reached

⁸⁴ The part of the press that dealt with the government's policies often quoted the phrase "Formosan scandals" to point out the state of anarchy, the low quality of colonial officials and the unjustified violence in Taiwan. See Walter Wallace McLaren, *A political history of Japan during the Meiji era, 1867-1912*, (New York 1965), pp. 243-249.

⁸⁵ The newspaper *The Scotchman* of 22 August 1896 commented that on the 23rd and the 24th of June the Japanese in Taiwan had confiscated houses at will, imprisoned innocents, beaten whomever they pleased, burned villages, raped women and arrested "for little or no reason". It was no wonder that the Taiwanese joined the ranks of the rebels in masses. The missionary Duncan Ferguson described in his writings these actions as "policy of extermination". Tōkyō's methods of "hunting down robbers" did not belong to "any civilized man". The Japanese were picking men randomly and executed them with bayonets, stole their goods and burned their houses. On 9 July 1896, he used the phrases "inhuman conduct of the Japanese", "Barbarous cruelty" and "weeping and mourning" to describe the situation. See SOAS PCE-FMC, series IV, box 3, file 6. George Ede secretary of the English Presbyterian mission in Taiwan testified that during the conflict, Japanese soldiers plundered and burned Christian chapels and massacred 21 men after torturing them at Moatau. See SOAS PCE-FMC, series IV, box 3, file 5, Formosa, July 4 1898.

⁸⁶ Ōe, "Shokuminchi ryōyū", p. 71.

⁸⁷ Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, pp. 173-174.

the capital, he reassured the inhabitants that the Japanese army would be there to guarantee their safety.⁸⁸

When the skillful politician Katsura Tarō took over in June 1896 expectations were high. When he assumed office he declared himself to be a gradual assimilationist like Hara and Itō.⁸⁹ Katsura acknowledged that his predecessor's excessive use of force against the civilians fuelled further resistance. The problem was the army officers' racist and brutal treatment in the pacified territories they were tasked with administering. Thus, Katsura promoted a policy of cooperation and friendly relations with the local elites. Soon however, after his appointment he requested from Tōkyō the dispatch of an additional 2,300 policemen and 1,500 gendarmeries to expand Japanese authority in every corner of the colony. The second Governor-General was eager to turn a blind eye to the harmful habit of opium smoking as long as the inhabitants were cooperative and did not threaten his power. He also planned to give amnesty to the rebel leaders in order to persuade them to surrender. His other goal was to bring about the improvement of transportation and of public health. In 1896, he wrote to Itō: "...the way to care for the natives is to show them kindness and the most easily perceived kindness is better safety and health". In relation to the state of the communications he declared in 1897: "If we cannot open these shipping routes (Japan-Taiwan-China-Philippines), the development of Taiwan is at an end... with such poor communications, who would risk the heat and plague to go there? If we are to have no immigrants to Taiwan, how can we built commerce and open up the land?"⁹⁰ His ultimate goal was the penetration of South China. Before having the opportunity to implement his ideas he was recalled in Tōkyō after just four months because his presence was deemed more essential there.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Winifred Kai-wen Chang, *Marshaling Culture: Strategies of Japanese Mobilization in Colonial Taiwan*, Ph.D Dissertation, University of California, 2012, pp. 40-41.

⁸⁹ However, by 1905 his opinion was diametrically different. Responding to the politician's Ōishi Masami (1855-1935) question in February about the policy to be followed in Taiwan, he said: "I will respond to the issue of whether [Taiwan] should become a part of Japan or treated as a colonial territory. It is without doubt a colonial territory. I believe that we cannot transform [Taiwan] to resemble the Japanese mainland." See Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, p. 95.

⁹⁰ Stewart Lone, *Army, Empire and Politics in Meiji Japan*, (New York 2000), pp. 48-49.

⁹¹ Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, p. 175. Despite his early discharge Katsura continued his involvement in Taiwan. In July 1898, he became president of the Taiwan Kyōkai (society) created in March of that year. In February 1899, a branch office was erected in Taihoku. The society's aims were among others to study all matters relating to Taiwan and assist in its administration, to send observers and organize surveys there, to assist Japanese immigration, to promote the study of the Taiwanese and Japanese languages, to organize lectures and publish a journal. The first Taiwan bulletin was published in October 1898 and contained information on Taiwan's forestry and industry. In September 1898 Katsura invited the most prominent businessmen and politicians to his residence to introduce them to the society. Among them was the new Prime Minister Ōkuma Shigenobu who declared on this occasion: "Commerce can bring our peoples together. It has the power to 'Japanize' the people of Taiwan, and this will be of major benefit to our administration of the island". Katsura enthusiastically collected donations and organized tours of the island for Japanese capitalists with the hope of attracting investments for the colony. Guerilla activity deterred those few interested businessmen. In May 1900, the Taiwan Society School was established in Tōkyō "to study all things necessary for public and private business in Taiwan and southern China". It received annual subsidies of 10,000 yen from the colonial treasury. Finally, the society participated at the Ōsaka Exhibition in April 1903 advertising the

In October 1896 another army officer, Lieutenant General Nogi succeeded Katsura. Nogi firmly believed that the application of Western style legislation in a place as ill prepared for these fundamental reforms as Taiwan would cause more social unrest. The new Governor-General adopted his predecessor's idea to substitute the local military administrators with civilian ones but not his leniency towards the rebels. This fact further strengthened the opposition. His tenure was characterized by the enhanced presence and role of the police. The 70 inspectors and 700 policemen in North Taiwan in 1895 increased to 3,270 by late 1897, distributed to the numerous new police branches as far as the island's southern tip. This rapid expansion however, meant that many of the officers were not trained or properly qualified to assume their duties. Police officers besides maintaining public order were now entrusted with broader tasks such as overseeing public sanitation. To facilitate the island's governance Nogi replaced the 12 sub-districts in Taiwan with 78 management offices (*bemmusho*) under the jurisdiction of each province and recognized as official administrative units, towns and villages (*Gai* and *Shō*). Every management office was divided into three sections: general affairs, police affairs and tax affairs. In November 1896, he instituted the Pacification Office to deal with the aborigines. Its goals were to open up natural resources, promote economic development and halt the atrocious head-hunting practice. Having in mind the reduction of expenses Nogi tried to cut down on the presence of the military⁹² in his administration and to promote its substitution by the less expensive police personnel. His triple guard system (*sandan keibi sei*) divided the island into three areas. The mountain and forest zone was assigned to the military and the gendarmerie, the cities and villages to the police and the rest to a mixed force. Each force had its own chain of command. These measures deteriorated Taiwan's already restive atmosphere and even increased the colonial government's expenses. The police's tasks coincided with those of the administration generating even more confusion. The management offices were inadequate to perform their designated duties and proved very expensive too as they were manned by handsomely paid but inefficient Japanese bureaucrats. Placing emphasis on the function of these offices while the local elites were being totally ignored was Nogi's greatest mistake. Furthermore, the third "intermediate" zone was not clearly defined and discords between the police and the military were often. Civilian abuse was not eradicated either. Nogi failed despite enjoying freedom of action in accordance with the Governor-General system and Law 63.⁹³

The first three governor-generals failed to achieve financial independence for the colony or even a suitable environment to attract capitals that would mitigate

colony's products and displaying Taiwanese aborigines side by side with Ainus and Okinawans. See Lone, *Army, Empire*, pp. 53-55.

⁹² Another measure that he took in order to check the army's influence in Taiwan was to transfer the telegraphic and postal services from the military's jurisdiction to the civil authority during his tenure. See Marco Zagarola, *Taiwan-Formosa: Da Shimonoseki alla fine del Secondo Conflitto Mondiale, 1895-1945*, vol. 2, Ph.D Dissertation, Sapienza University of Rome (1991), p. 258.

⁹³ Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, pp. 175-178.

Tōkyō's economic commitments. The year 1898 constitutes an epoch-changing threshold between the earlier unproductive colonial rule and the subsequent efficient, pragmatic, consistent administration under the direction of talented bureaucrats. Indeed, legislation and reforms after February 1898 were scientific, modern and enlightening, or to put it better were presented as such in order to earn the world's approval. In reality Japan's rule continued to be oppressive and violent as any other policy of colonial control and the new reformers devoted their efforts in exploiting and further tightening Tōkyō's grip in Taiwan. Regardless of their motives the island entered a new era of planned capitalistic development, of economic profitability for the foreign masters and of sounder and more methodical governance. Starting from the new Governor-General and his Chief of Civil Affairs the Japanese showed great enthusiasm about their first colonial endeavour and curiosity about their new colony; they set out to study as "scientifically" as possible the colonized and make them loyal, healthy and productive in a way that none of the imperial powers ever attempted. Drafts, charts and surveys were employed as evidence of Japan's ability in colonizing and as a way to control more effectively its subjects; statistics were the episteme of colonial government. Land, population,⁹⁴ mineral resources, hygiene, education, literally every aspect of the colonial society was registered and accounted for. Taiwan, as Japan's first colony, was the nation's "colonial laboratory", a test for further empire-building.⁹⁵ Successful colonization not only would set the pattern for colonial policies in Korea and Manchuria.⁹⁶ It would also make Japan appear as bearer of the civilizing mission to those both within and outside its boundaries and a peer among its western counterparts, finally gaining their recognition and respect.

In 1896 almost 7 million yen was allocated to the colonial government by Tōkyō and another 6 million the following year as subsidies. The colonial government's tax revenue was 2,7 million in 1896 and 5,3 in 1897. During the tenures as heads of Civil Affairs of Mizuno Jun, the most important bureaucrat of the colony before 1898, and his replacement Sone Shizuo (1845-1903), a Finance Ministry official, the colonial administration aggrandized numbers and costs without tangible results. By late 1897 the perpetuation of violence, of scandals and of high expenses had shaken Tōkyō's confidence in Nogi's administration. Serious discussions about selling the colony, viewed as a burden, a luxury or a nuisance by some⁹⁷ to France for

⁹⁴ The Japanese reported the population of the island as 2,587,688 in 1896 and 3,123,302 in 1905, a remarkable increase of 21% in nine years. See Office of Population Research, "Colonial Demography: Formosa" in *Population Index*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Jul., 1944), p. 150. The first population census, organized in 1905, roughly showed that the inhabitants of Chinese origin numbered over 2,800,000, the aborigines about 135,000, and the Japanese officials and colonists, excluding the military, some 50,000. See Komagome and Mangan, "Japanese colonial education", p. 313. For the detailed official results of the 1905 census see: Committee of the Formosan special census investigation, *The Special population census of Formosa*, (Tokyo 1909), p. 31.

⁹⁵ Yamamoto, *Nihon shokuminchi keizaishi kenkyū*, p. 4.

⁹⁶ Asano, *Shokuminchi Teikoku*, p. 4.

⁹⁷ The journalist Kuga Katsunan in April 1898 wrote: "Hainan Island, Hong Kong, Samsah Bay, Chusan island, and their coastlines, have all been occupied by others. Even though Taiwan and the Pescadores look on to Southern China, they are set to become practically no more than isolated South

100 million yen made their appearance.⁹⁸ The budget for the colony in 1896 was 10,610,000 yen of which only 2,620,000 were actually received. In 1897 many argued that the tax payers' money had to be invested in more crucial economic sectors at home amidst Tōkyō's modernization efforts.⁹⁹ In January 1898 when Itō became Prime Minister, Nogi and Sone were recalled. Kodama Gentarō, one of the army's most prominent figures, was appointed as Taiwan's Governor General in February. For the post of the chief of Civil Affairs, Katsura proposed Gotō Shinpei a medical doctor and the chief of Home Ministry's Sanitation Bureau.¹⁰⁰

The Minister of Finance, Inoue Kaoru was not sure about Gotō and had him present his ideas about Taiwan in a memorandum. Gotō passed the test with flying colors; his memorandum called "Rehabilitation of the Taiwan Administration" shaped the Japanese colonial policy until 1915, when the last of his protégés left the Governor-General administration. In his memorandum, Gotō lamented the colonial authorities' disregard of the Taiwanese practices and administrative institutions. Instead of spending money Tōkyō could adopt traditional methods of control such as policing, village adjudication and tax collection that were already familiar to the colonized. Abrupt modernization for Taiwan was not feasible at the moment. For Gotō the Governor-General government ought to be more efficient and smaller in size in order to cut down the expenses. Lastly Taiwan should be developed through deficit financing by floating government bonds: the government had to invest more money than it actually pocketed with the expectation that enhanced economic activity would make up for the deficit. The money had to be used for the construction of railways, harbors, artillery batteries, sewage systems. Gotō concluded that monopoly on opium selling and a new tax reform could diminish the colony's economic reliance on Japan proper. Inoue and other cabinet members were convinced. Gotō appeared more inclined to embrace the more economic and efficient, in establishing control, British paradigm than assimilation, which appeared to him as impractical for the time.¹⁰¹

Gotō's approach was more methodical than the ones employed by previous colonial bureaucrats. He saw himself as the physician and the Taiwanese as the backward, "ill" population to be medically treated and brought to modern, civilized

Sea islands, worthless for our China policy. Do not British or German ships already sit in Samsah Bay, in Taiwan's immediate neighbor, Fujian? Japan is increasingly being ejected from Far Eastern affairs. Today the occupation of Taiwan seems more like a burden". See Lone, *Army, Empire*, p. 43. Many perceived the colony as a luxury but for the agronomist Nitobe it was "a necessity". See Inazo Nitobe, "Japan as a Colonizer" in *The Journal of Race Development*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (Apr., 1912), p. 359.

⁹⁸ One newspaper article at the time reached the conclusion that: "no benefit left, no cost that will be repaid, no prospect of quelling bandits, and no way to control foreigners [there]. Japan keeps Taiwan only because abandoning the territory would damage Japan's international standing and inhibit Japan's advancement". See Nomura, "Making the Japanese Empire", p. 76.

⁹⁹ Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan*, p. 17.

¹⁰⁰ Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, pp. 81-83.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 83. Gotō declared that it would take at least 80 years of cultural assimilation until the colonized reach the level of the Japanese. See Leo Tsu-Shin Ching, *Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation*, (Berkeley-London 2001), p. 25.

life. His prescription was a thorough survey of the island's society and the application of "principles of biology" in line with the Social Darwinist norms. The Japanese colonizers, were like doctors,¹⁰² seen as absolute superiors, spiritually and technologically. On the other hand, the Taiwanese were the uncivilized patients in need of enlightenment and of the metropolis' intensive care. Gotō, at some point, professed that colonial policy had to be "based on thorough research".¹⁰³ As he told to Kodama: "We cannot suddenly change the eyes of a halibut to look like those of a sea bream. Likewise, the fact that we need to respect customs comes from the principles of biology". In contrast to Hara and others that saw Taiwan, Okinawa and Hokkaidō as integral parts of the empire, Gotō was well aware that Taiwan was just a colony. Upon arriving there to take his post on 28 March 1898 he declared: "In substance, Taiwan is a colonial territory; it is indeed our nation's only colonial territory, and will be our training ground in colonial policymaking". Thus, western colonial patterns were useful and applicable. He suggested that some of the native customs and institutions of the Qing period should be maintained in the interest of Japan's rule. In this way Gotō put forward a new special legal system for Taiwan, influenced by Western and Chinese law that set the example of the Japanese administration that was to come in Taiwan and Korea. For example, despite the grandiose proclamations about "enlightenment" the ancient custom of flogging,¹⁰⁴ banned in metropolitan Japan, was deemed as useful by Taihoku and was maintained because of its efficiency and low cost.¹⁰⁵ The Japanese were anxious to make their first colonial undertaking a success,¹⁰⁶ not only to serve the sole interests of Japan but also "to satisfy their pride

¹⁰² Gotō's associate Takagi Tomoe wrote in 1902: "There are always the missionaries working as pioneers in those foreign colonies. This is not the case with Japan. On this matter, Mr. Goto's view is to make the doctors as substitutes for the missionaries." See Lung-chih, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony*, p. 190.

¹⁰³ Yao Jen-To, "The Japanese Colonial State and Its Form of Knowledge in Taiwan" in *Taiwan Under Japanese Colonial Rule, 1895–1945: History, Culture, Memory*, ed. L. Ping-Hui, D. Der-wei Wang, (New York, 2006), pp. 42–46.

¹⁰⁴ According to the 1904 Fine and Flogging Law, the detainees had the right to select detention, flogging or fine. Most of the times they opted for prison because of their low living standards. Another suppressing measure was the 1906 Taiwan Vagrant Control Regulations which gave the police the power to punish any troublemakers in the colony and compel them into forced labour. See Wang, *Legal reform*, p. 48.

¹⁰⁵ Wang, *Legal reform*, pp. 47–51. The violent actions undertaken by the colonial state on numerous occasions were contradictory to the scientific and civilizing process. Employing corporal punishment and outmoded Taiwanese customs was incompatible with the modernity and the enlightenment so often quoted by the Japanese imperialists to justify their rule. See Nadin Heé, "Taiwan under Japanese Rule. Showpiece of a Model Colony? Historiographical Tendencies in Narrating Colonialism" in *History Compass*, 12/8 (2014), pp. 632–641.

¹⁰⁶ Takekoshi Yosaburō while visiting the colony in 1904 exclaimed: "Japan can point to her success thus far in Formosa as a proof of her worthiness to be admitted into the community of the world's great colonial powers". Japan's success was extraordinary, taking into consideration the lack "of capital, but also of able and powerful merchants". After passing the "first examination as a colonizing nation" Japan as a worthy imperialist could in the future become the "Queen of the Pacific". Rear-Admiral Tōgō Minoru (1890–1962) triumphantly wrote in 1916: "We have admirably transformed this chaotic situation, restored peace, established order ... The reason for our distinguished record in colonization is

of possession and to gain repute among the powers". Tōkyō's policies were not put in practice to benefit the Taiwanese, albeit they incidentally brought about: "the highest material standard of living that is available to ordinary citizens anywhere in the Far East, with the possible exception of Japan itself."¹⁰⁷ Taiwan was a test of Japan's status as a power and thus it was an experiment that had to succeed. Successful colonization according to the principles of Social Darwinism meant that Japan as a strong state had the right to absorb weaker nations and further expand.¹⁰⁸

The Kodama-Gotō era can be divided in two periods: the emergency phase from 1898 to 1902 and the development phase from 1902 to 1906. During the first period, the pacification of the island was set as a priority. This is when the police presence was intensified and the study of old customs was put forward with the goal of finally controlling the riotous population. Taiwan's institutions had to be improved and modernized but the island was not yet ready for the direct implementation of more sophisticated laws like those in effect in Japan. In May 1901, the chief of Civil Affairs attacked through an article the assimilationist policymakers in Tōkyō and stated that Taiwan required at least for the time being a special and distinct legal framework.¹⁰⁹

Gotō espoused Kirkwood's theories about indirect rule: "In order to govern Taiwan with success, the metropolitan government should interfere with colonial affairs as little as possible. It is necessary to delegate full authority to the governor-general and to sanction the autonomous actions of the colonial government".¹¹⁰ The fact that in his office he held a great selection of western works on colonialism is often cited to show his adoption of foreign models of ruling.¹¹¹ He presented his tenure's programme in a lecture about colonial administration in 1915: "When we took possession of Taiwan, there was no pre-determined policy available. Governor-general Kodama thus decided the following outlines to be the foundation of governance: (1) To base the administration on scientific research, especially on biology. (2) To increase the harmony between the civilian and the military officials. (3) To investigate the land and people while tackling the urgent affairs. (4) To research the legal relations between Taiwan and the homeland. (5) To substitute sanitation facilities for religion as means of colonization. (6) To adopt special methods for the police, legal and economic organizations. (7) To pacify the "bandits" and "savages" with the priority on the "bandits" and (8) to deal with the national or

the result of the Japanese race's unique ability to rule another people and our skill in colonial management...". See Ching, "*Becoming 'Japanese'*", pp. 15-17.

¹⁰⁷ M. A. Aziz, *Japan's Colonialism and Indonesia*, Ph.D Dissertation, Leyden University 1955, pp. 7-10.

¹⁰⁸ Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, p. 85-86.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., pp. 92-93.

¹¹⁰ Lung-chih, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony*, p. 175.

¹¹¹ Gunnar Abramson, "Comparative Colonialisms: Variations in Japanese Colonial Policy in Taiwan and Korea, 1895 - 1945," in PSU McNair Scholars Online Journal: Vol. 1: Iss. 1, Article 5 (2004), p. 18.

racial awareness with appropriate measures".¹¹² On a different occasion, he explained his "biological politics". In one memorandum to Kodama he affirmed: "Any scheme of colonial administration, given the present advances in science, should be based on principles of Biology. What are these principles? They are to promote science and develop agriculture, industry, sanitation, education, communications, and police force. If these are satisfactorily accomplished, we will be able to persevere in the struggle for survival and win the struggle of the "survival of the fittest." Animals survive by overcoming heat and cold, and by enduring thirst and hunger. This is possible for them because they adapt to their environment. Thus, depending upon time and place, we too should adopt suitable measures and try to overcome the various difficulties that confront us. In our administration of Taiwan we will then be assured of a future of brilliance and glory".¹¹³ He went on to claim that: "The essence of colonial management lies in the foundation of biology and today's scientific progress. What I meant by the foundation of biology is to improve scientific ways of life such as trade, industry, sanitation, education, communication and policing. Based on this foundation, we can face up to the struggle for survival and realize the law of survival of the fittest. Just like those animals that adapt themselves to the environments and survive, we should adjust ourselves according to time and places. By so doing, we can overcome all kinds of difficulties and devise the appropriate schemes in order to achieve the glory of Taiwan management". As he explained to Inoue Kaoru in early 1898: "The essence of British colonial policy is not drastic legal reform, but the use of 'conveniences of civilization' namely, the scientific facilities such as railway, sewerage, steam boat, telegraph and hospitals, etc., to change the attitudes of the people".¹¹⁴ The Chief of Civil Affairs never really intended to confer equal rights or self-government to the Taiwanese. He was reluctant to introduce enlightened principles of modern civilization such as freedom or democracy to "rough and infantile people".¹¹⁵ The civilization he promoted was material and not spiritual.

In the early 1880s a debate, prompted by the unequal treaties revision, was held on whether foreigners should be allowed to live in Japan, among the Japanese. The mixed-blood idea (the Japanese originally consisted of different racial groups such as Southern Islanders, Koreans, Ainu. Hence this theory justified Japan's colonial domination over its kin nations) was in line with modern anthropology but for those that professed the purity of national essence,¹¹⁶ the Japanese society should

¹¹² Lung-chih, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony*, p. 205.

¹¹³ Chang Han-Yu and Ramon H. Myers, "Japanese Colonial Development Policy in Taiwan, 1895-1906: A Case of Bureaucratic Entrepreneurship" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (Aug., 1963), p. 438.

¹¹⁴ Lung-chih, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony*, pp. 197-198.

¹¹⁵ For Gotō the mentality of the natives was "naïve and childlike". He deemed his posting in Taiwan as "exile". See Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, pp. 116-117, 126.

¹¹⁶ The historian Taguchi Ukichi (1855-1905) believed that the Japanese are "racially distinguished" from the Yellow race and "racially similar to peoples of India, Persia, Greece and Rome". See Leo Tsu-Shin Ching, *Tracing contradictions: Interrogating Japanese colonialism and its discourse*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California (1994), p. 52.

not be tainted by foreigners. The Meiji leaders, by incorporating the Ainus and the Ryūkyūans clearly favoured the “mixed-blood” approach and by 1895 many in Japan appeared in favour of assimilating the Taiwanese as long as they adopted the benevolent programme of Japanization. Racial affinity and cultural proximity was a double-edged sword. On one hand, many based on these traits believed that assimilation and eventually, adoption into the imperial family state was possible.¹¹⁷ Others however, tried to exaggerate the differences between colonizers and colonized to elevate Japanese prestige and to maintain authority over the ruled, making Japan appear as a Western colonial power. Seven months after Gotō took office he realized: “...There was nothing different between Japanese and Chinese [in Taiwan] in skin color and all other physical features. This situation is highly different from how the Dutch, the French or the Spanish held and ruled over their colonies. Therefore, if [we Japanese] do not behave ourselves discreetly and maintain our dignity I believe it would be difficult to make the newly incorporated people respect us with all their hearts. Why do I say so? If [the Chinese in Taiwan] cut their hair and put on western clothes they would become totally the same as us; nay, their physique may be superior to the Japanese...”. He wanted the Taiwanese to respect Japan’s authority, but not to make them fully Japanese (discriminatory assimilation). Nitobe Inazō, the architect of Taiwan’s modern sugar industry, was also worried that the smaller physical stature of the Japanese in relation to Chinese and Taiwanese could harm their status as rulers. To make up for this deficiency Nitobe proposed further coercion as well as grandeur; government buildings had to be constructed in a way that would instill awe to the natives. It was a way to overcome the inferiority complex and the anxiety that the Taiwanese and Japanese were similar and both threatened by the West.¹¹⁸ Nitobe is attributed with the iconic phrase “colonization is the spread of civilization”.¹¹⁹

Taiwan can be considered an exploitation colony where the rulers were an absolute minority among the natives. Whereas French assimilationism embraced a romantic civic and republican universalism, the Japanese version was rather racial;¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Japan was trying to prove to the West that it was a civilized state and in the same time to convince the other Asian nations that its “colonialism was fundamentally better than European tyranny because of the racial affinities”. See Ying Xiong, *Representing Empire: Japanese Colonial Literature in Taiwan and Manchuria*, (Leiden 2014), p. 31.

¹¹⁸ Feelings of inferiority towards the more advanced and menacing western nations and of superiority over the more backward Asian and African nations placed Japan in the middle position of the racial hierarchy according to some scholars such as the famous author Natsume Sōseki (1867-1916) and Fukuzawa. See Robert Thomas Tierney, *Tropics of Savagery: The Culture of Japanese Empire in Comparative Frame*, (London, 2010), pp. 17-26.

¹¹⁹ Lung-chih, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony*, p. 200.

¹²⁰ For the colonial expert Tadao Yanaihara (1893-1961) assimilation was not the early administration’s main policy. It was only a scheme to differentiate Japanese colonialism from its western counterparts and silence those in Taiwan and Japan that were calling for the colony’s political autonomy. Yanaihara argues that the assimilation rhetoric and the militaristic rule constitute the two most fundamental characteristics of French colonialism. Japanese colonialism partially shared these characteristics. However, the French case derived from the 18th century enlightenment philosophy: the colonized possessed the capability to become French and have the same rights as the French. For the Japanese, political rights are only assured after the colonized have completed the process of becoming Japanese. Thus, Japanese assimilation was based on the ethnocentric, militaristic, racist and

the goal was the integration of the Taiwanese as (lesser) members in the Yamato family.¹²¹ In theory the whole population of the colonies, and not a few native elites, would be given equal rights at some point. Education, of the Japanese language that is,¹²² was the means by which assimilation would be accomplished.¹²³ The first step was assimilation before integration. The goal was to transform the peripheral peoples into Japanese (to make the colonized as similar as possible to the colonizers), before granting them the status of Japanese citizen just like it happened in Hokkaidō and the Ryūkyū islands.¹²⁴ It was deemed risky to grant citizenship rights lightly to peoples whose loyalty was problematic or else the metropolis itself would be in danger of disintegration.¹²⁵ Japan was not a superpower. Its limited resources meant that realistic priorities and a gradualist approach had to define its incorporation of foreign territories.¹²⁶

Gotō also promoted a centralized bureaucratic organization to take charge of the colony. Every facet of political, economic, and social policy was to be decided by the Civil Affairs Department, subject to the approval of the Governor General. Kabayama hired many colonial employees from Kagoshima, his home city.¹²⁷ Ishizuka Eizō (1866-1942), who was to be the colony's 13th Governor-General, lamented the low standard of these men,¹²⁸ the mismanagement and the corruption

nationalistic conviction of the superiority of the Japanese spirit. Ching, "*Becoming 'Japanese'*", pp. 98-99.

¹²¹ Sayaka Chatani, *Nation-Empire: Rural Youth Mobilization in Japan, Taiwan, and Korea, 1895-1945*, Ph.D Dissertation Columbia University 2014, p.7.

¹²² Only through the unique and sacred Japanese language could one become a real Japanese according to colonial educators. Faye Yuan Kleeman, *Under an Imperial Sun: Japanese Colonial Literature of Taiwan and the South*, (Honolulu 2003), p. 129.

¹²³ Chikashi Furukawa, *Taiwan, Kankoku, Okinawa de Nihongo wa nani o shita no ka: gengo shihai no motarasu mono* [What did Japanese do in Taiwan, Korea, Okinawa: results of linguistic control], (Tokyo, 2007) p. 24.

¹²⁴ Komegome, *Shokuminchi teikoku*, pp. 58-59.

¹²⁵ Political and administrative autonomy could prove fatal for Tōkyō's long-term grip over Taiwan. The Taiwanese, as the Ryūkyūans and the Ainu before them, had to be politically, spiritually and culturally assimilated for the metropolis' national security and well-being. Hara on 2 January 1899 wrote in favour of the assimilation doctrine and warned that "appeasement buys peace in the short term" but can be dangerous in the future. Isawa Shūji, Taiwan's Education Bureau Chief from 1895 until 1897, could not agree more: "In order to maintain order in a new territory, in addition to conquering it externally through force, it is necessary to conquer its spirit, dispel its old national dreams, and realize a new national spirit. In other words, it is necessary to pursue Japanization". Japanization would be achieved mainly through education as in the other two peripheral territories. See Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, p. 63.

¹²⁶ Ching, *Tracing contradictions*, pp. 86-89.

¹²⁷ The pacifist author Uchimura Kanzō sarcastically commented: "Of Satsuma [the government's] misrule in Formosa, it is all too painful for us to tell. The Land of the Virtuous in extending its 'virtuous rule' over its newly acquired colony, has converted it to a den of robbers and extortioners. Formosa that was got as a guarantee of the peace in the East now proves a 'thorn in the flesh' of the nation that got it, and a fear of disintegration of the empire from which it was gotten". See Urs Matthias Zachmann, *China and Japan in the Late Meiji Period: China Policy and the Japanese Discourse on National Identity, 1895-1904*, (London-New York 2009), pp. 48-49.

¹²⁸ According to a field report written in 1896 "it goes without saying that they have poor experience and talent in regard to their professional duties; and in addition, not only are they often not well-versed in their role, but they also (pass their time in) amusement and idleness, and avoid matters with the

that tormented the first administrations. Gotō Shinpei implemented financial rationalization and a drastic cost cutting policy.¹²⁹ He reduced the number of prefectures to 3 and the branch offices (bemmusho) to 45. Special appointments were discontinued and 1,080 officials were removed. Gotō travelled to Japan throughout 1898 to find and recruit young and qualified officials such as: Nitobe Inazō (agricultural development); Hampei Nagao (construction), Tatsumi Iwai (finance), and Nakamura Zekō or Yoshikoto (1867-1927) (monopoly bureaus). Other posts were manned by capable prefectural officials or university graduates that constituted Gotō's team in the Civil Administration department. The group met regularly to decide upon new policies and Gotō as the director always pushed for better performance and efficiency. A measure that was to enhance the rulers' authority was the separation of the colonial officials from the populace. The Chief of Civil Affairs instructed these particular bureaucrats to wear distinct uniforms and live in designated compounds.¹³⁰ Therefore, the pillars of Japan's colonial policy in Taiwan after 1898 were efficient organization and the British tactic of impressing the colonized through uniforms, city planning and architecture. The adoption of this policy masked Japanese insecurity; they tried to prove that they were superior, modern, and different from the uncivilized Taiwanese from any point of view.

Gotō overstated the importance of Taiwan's successful colonization to Japan: "Our nation's history as a Colonial Power commences with the story of our administration in Formosa, and our failure or success there must exercise a marked influence on all our future undertakings". However, Japanese colonialism did not commence in 1895 with the acquisition of Taiwan. The colonization of Hokkaidō and the Ryūkyūs set the pattern for the administration of Taiwan and later of Korea. Taking this in consideration we can divide the Japanese colonial period in two parts: the internal "secondary" colonialism from 1868 to 1895 and the external expansion from 1895 until 1945.¹³¹

General Kodama Gentarō's contribution in the colony's administration is often overshadowed by his Chief of Civil Affairs' fame. Before becoming Taiwan's fourth Governor-General, he had a great military reputation and was considered one of the army's most prominent officers. He had participated in the Boshin war, the quelling of the Saga and the Satsuma rebellions and later he had served as head of the Army War College and Vice Army Minister. Concurrently with his colonial post he was appointed Army Minister from December 1900 to June 1901. Officially he served as

excuse of illness" and "government officials in Taiwan are, for the most part, (none but) inferior employees, ones who seek an official career in a new territory either because they cannot obtain a posting in naichi, or because they could not retain their position as officials in naichi due to their bad job performance". See Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, p. 45.

¹²⁹ Ts'ai, *Taiwan in Japan's Empire*, pp. 53-54.

¹³⁰ Han-Yu and Myers, "Japanese Colonial Development Policy, pp. 437-438.

¹³¹ Hui Ju Chang, *Victorian Japan in Taiwan Transmission and Impact of the 'Modern' upon the Architecture of Japanese Authority, 1853-1919*, Ph.D Dissertation, University of Sheffield (December 2014), pp. 257-259, 294.

the colony's director, but in practice he was number two after Gotō. His views reflected part of the views of the late 19th century-early 20th Meiji upper classes. For the military, Taiwan was not just an outer territory but a spearhead of Japan's survival and further expansion.

In July 1895 Tōkyō's diplomatic authorities formally informed Russia, France and Germany, the members of the Triple Intervention, that Japan had assumed control of Taiwan. The following month the sea boundary between the Philippine island chain and the Japanese colony was delimited.¹³² Fearful of foreign influence and political penetration the new rulers tried to isolate the colony from the outside world except from Japan.¹³³ Mass Chinese immigration into the island was discouraged and western commercial interests were obstructed as much as possible. Many western merchants trading the island's products pre-colonially in the designated treaty ports abandoned their operations due to Tōkyō's favouritism towards Japanese businesses.¹³⁴ Expulsion of foreign merchants was also achieved through hostile measures directed against them and the state monopolies of the colony's most prized products.¹³⁵ Interaction between the Taiwanese and South Chinese became more difficult. Furthermore, the Taiwanese that were allowed to travel in mainland China could do so as Japanese nationals after May 1897 and were always shadowed by the Japanese authorities.¹³⁶ The Japanese Foreign Ministry had to provide for their security in

¹³²Lung-chih, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony*, p. 163.

¹³³ One 1901 editorial of the British *China Mail* accused the Japanese of restricting the activities of the foreigners and expelling them from the colony. See Zagarola, *Taiwan-Formosa*, vol. 2, pp. 280-281.

¹³⁴ After 1895 a commercial company was established in Taihoku to assume and promote the trade of sugar, camphor and tea in the colony. When the majority of the company shares passed to wealthy western merchants the colonial state started to pose problems for the firm and shut down the central Taihoku branch. See "The Formosan trading company", *The Kobe Chronicle*, n. 151, Vol. VL, Wednesday May 23 1900, p. 438.

¹³⁵ In the opening years of the Japanese presence on the island, Taiwanese tea was still shipped from Tamsui to British Hong Kong and then to the world. From 1899 onwards Japanese shipping lines undertook the transportation of tea to America bypassing Hong Kong triggering the protests of the British merchants that had held the prospering trade until then. After 1899 Tokyo imposed higher duties for foreign imports in Taiwan than those levied on Japanese products. Taiwanese rice, tea and sugar carried duties when exported abroad, but not when they were earmarked for Japan. In addition, Japanese banks replaced the foreign credit institution in the island. By 1902 only a few foreign firms remained in Taiwan. The British shipping company that connected Taiwan with Hong Kong seized operations in 1905 as a result of the funding that Taihoku provided to Ōsaka Commercial Shipping Company to aid it in competing with foreign firms. After Japan took over Taiwan, a large volume of Japanese goods shipped was sent to South China via Taiwan. Among the destinations for the Japanese goods shipped through Taiwan were, in order of volume, Xiamen, Fuzhou, Shantou, Hong Kong and Canton. See Man-Houng Lin, "Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Pacific, 1895-1945" in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 5 (Sept. 2010), pp. 1061-1076.

¹³⁶ From a legal point of view the Taiwanese lied beyond the Japanese constitution's full authority because they were considered inhabitants of a domain outside of Japan proper. The Bonin and Ryūkyū Islands were fully incorporated but territories as Taiwan, Karafuto (South Sakhalin) and Korea that were acquired after the promulgation of the constitution in 1889 remained legally "outer territories". Although the Shimonoseki treaty stipulated that after 2 years the Taiwanese that chose to remain in the island after 8 May 1897, would become Japanese subjects they were declared instead Japanese nationals. Abroad they enjoyed Japanese privileges such as the right of extraterritoriality in China; inside the colony they were placed under special, discriminatory regulations regarding employment or schooling. The Taiwanese did not enjoy the same status and rights as the Japanese inhabitants in the

China and in many occasions the Japanese consulates' guard intervened on their behalf in Chinese treaty ports like Fuzhou and Xiamen.¹³⁷ Albeit without the same citizen rights as the Japanese, the colonized made use of this protection to enhance their commercial activities in the mainland.¹³⁸

On a broader level Taiwan was to serve as Japan's base of operations in the imperialistic field. The colony would act as a conduit through which Japanese influence and capital were to augment Tōkyō's interests and enable territorial expansion in south China and beyond. Katsura declared: "If we want to frame a policy for managing Taiwan, we must formulate a policy toward China. This requires devising policy for managing south China, and to accomplish that, we must manage the harbor of Amoy and Fukien. If we intend to do these things, we must ultimately consider a policy that relates to South-East Asia".¹³⁹ In 1896 he claimed: "... the development of Taiwan should not be confined to the island, but should be planned in terms of an advance into a wider area". In the summer of 1896, while writing to Itō, he added: "We must make Southern China, the Fukien zone, ours, and establish a close connection with Amoy".¹⁴⁰ He continued: "...in political and trade terms, Amoy will be our most important point, serving as a new channel for our ways and goods. With this, we can nurse our possibilities in the Fujian region and be ready when opportunity appears..." and "...We should hold matters in the north and push south, reaching out from the Japan Sea to the China Sea and all parts of the coast".¹⁴¹ Kodama was of the same opinion. In his "Fourteen-point Memorandum on the Past and Future Administration of Taiwan of 1899", he stated: "In order to accomplish nanshin [southern expansion doctrine] ... we should make it our policy to gain a predominant commercial influence in South China and the South Seas".¹⁴² Fukuzawa Yukichi commented after the acquisition of the island: "...now that Taiwan has become already our territory, we must defend it like our mother country and must not lose one inch of our land... Depending on the case, we may be forced to attack, as well. Because it is a rule that if you want to protect a hundred percent, you will have to have a hundred and thirty or hundred and fifty per cent. Thus, we must be prepared

colony. Tōkyō, primarily concerned with how to make the island profitable and its rule sturdy was not ready to implement legal equalization that would additionally hinder the colonizers' prestige. If the Taiwanese were considered legally Japanese the military's maltreatment would have been unconstitutional and illegal. See Lamley, *The Taiwan Literati*, pp. 307-308.

¹³⁷ The privileges and the protection of the Taiwanese enraged the Chinese; Taiwanese shops were frequently attacked or boycotted by the local population. See Harry J. Lamley, "Taiwan under Japanese rule, 1895-1945, The Vicissitudes of Colonialism" in *Taiwan: A New History*, ed. M. A. Rubinstein, (New York-London, 2007), p. 230.

¹³⁸ Erik Esselstrom, *Crossing Empire's Edge: Foreign Ministry Police and Japanese Expansionism in Northeast Asia*, (Honolulu 2009), p. 43.

¹³⁹ Han-Yu and Myers, "Japanese Colonial Development Policy, p. 434.

¹⁴⁰ In 1898 Katsura commented: "...the seas from north Sakhalin to the southern Pescadores being in our grasp, we have succeeded in extending the Japan Sea one thousand *li* to the south. Now we are truly the Britain of the South". See Lone, *Army, Empire*, p. 41.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁴² J. Charles Schencking, "The Imperial Japanese Navy and the Constructed Consciousness of a South Seas Destiny, 1872-1921" in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (Oct., 1999), p. 779.

that, if we want to protect Taiwan, we might have to move forward and protect territory outside of the island".¹⁴³ His grandiose plans for Asia had been revealed earlier, in 1882: "We shall someday raise the national power of Japan so that not only shall we control the natives of China and India as the English do today, but we shall also possess in our hands the power to rebuke the English and to rule Asia ourselves".¹⁴⁴ In 1899 Mizuno Jun stated: "If our country had not taken possession of Taiwan, it is clear that some other country would not have failed to seize it as Germany had done in Jiaozhou Bay or Russia in Dalian and Lüshun...". An 1899 *Nippon* newspaper editorial claimed that given that the colony was a "total failure in economic terms... whether (we) either make it a stepping-stone in the Empire's southern advance, or at least a lock-and-key for the empire's southern portal, we should not necessarily balk at spending ten million yen in government funds". An *Asahi* newspaper editorial of the same year stated: "In the treaty of Shimonoseki (our) demand for the island of Taiwan is one based on primarily on military strategic motives... This island cannot avoid being extremely unsuitable for the opening of land for development and colonization."¹⁴⁵ The historian and journalist Tokutomi Sohō perceived Taiwan as a natural "footing for the expansion of Greater Japan" in the South even before the acquisition of the island: "Taiwan is a strategic point, like Japan's south gate. If Japan intends to expand its territorial map of the Greater Japan Empire toward the south, there is no room for discussion about whether Japan has to go through this gate... It is natural... to expand to the Strait of Malacca, the Indochinese and Malay Peninsulas and to the South Seas islands through this gate... If we do not acquire it today, some other power will take it in the future. Taiwan is an easy prey in Asia". Katsura claimed that "the areas in South China ought to become like the Korean Peninsula" and concluded that "it is not difficult to expand political and commercial strength to the South Seas in the future from the base of Taiwan".¹⁴⁶ In this sense the financial loss for the mother country was deemed as secondary in comparison to the colony's strategic value.

Although the veterans of the 1874 campaign never abandoned the dream of Japan's return to Taiwan, the island's occupation was more of an adventurist byproduct of the Sino-Japanese war and less the fruit of a long term official strategy. Japan's focus on Taiwan was not constant. It was Korea rather than Taiwan that had dominated Meiji foreign policy for decades. This fact is verified by Japan's initial confusion in governing the island. Taiwanese resistance shook the invaders' confidence in their civilization mission and transformed the project of a peaceful administration into a military campaign for years to come. Gotō admitted Tōkyō's unpreparedness: "The Japanese occupation of Taiwan was the unexpected result of the

¹⁴³ Zachmann, *China and Japan*, p. 61.

¹⁴⁴ Chang, *Victorian Japan*, p. 261.

¹⁴⁵ Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, pp. 49, 62.

¹⁴⁶ Ken'ichi Gotō, "Japan's southward advance and colonial Taiwan" in *European Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2004), pp. 16-17.

Sino-Japanese war. We were not yet prepared for any civilized colonial policy".¹⁴⁷ In any case, Japan was now in possession of a colony and sought to make the most of it amidst the international imperialistic struggle. Kodama in 1900 at a conference of island administrators presented his long-term goals: "In recent years, the European powers have expanded their influence in Asia. How should we meet this threat? The military strength of the West is derived from their science and knowledge. Asian countries cannot match them in this area.... For this reason, the Western powers have been able to oppress the peoples of the Far East. In order for us to acquire the power to oppose them so that we can continue to dominate in the Far East and pre-serve the peace, there is no other recourse open to us but to acquire more knowledge and increase our wealth." He concluded: "Today's most urgent task is to develop the resources of Taiwan. Taiwan cannot ignore the challenge of economic warfare, the trend so prevalent in the world today. As the island's production will soon double, this will enable us to keep pace with the progress of other countries in the world. Japan and her territories will then be on an equal footing with the European powers in the event of economic warfare". The message was clear; Japan had to acquire more territories, exploit their resources and challenge the economic predominance of the other empires. Taiwan had to be developed agriculturally in order to supply food and raw materials to the mother country in this conflict; industrial development was reserved for the metropolis alone.¹⁴⁸

Japan chose to develop Taiwan into a major source of foodstuff and planned its actions accordingly. Increased demand for foodstuff in Japan signified the island's transformation into an export orientated economy. Thus, the industrial sector did not receive governmental support. Besides the production of sugar, Taiwan's industry remained underdeveloped whereas its agricultural output slowly but steadily increased.¹⁴⁹ Farmer associations promoted agricultural education to the Taiwanese farmers and new fertilizers, irrigation systems and seeds were gradually adopted.¹⁵⁰ During the 1890s, the share of Taiwan's exports to the metropolis rose from 10% to 30%.¹⁵¹ The pacification of the colony was the priority for the Japanese in the first years. Subsequently a sound financial foundation had to be placed in the colony. The Triple intervention and the Russian threat in the North signified a period of reconciliation and collaboration with the colonial powers. Hence for the time being any expansionistic tendencies had to be suppressed and a more opportune occasion, such as the First World War, had to be found. Kodama, despite popular belief,¹⁵²

¹⁴⁷ Lung-chih, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony*, pp. 112-119.

¹⁴⁸ Han-Yu and Myers, "Japanese Colonial Development Policy, p. 436.

¹⁴⁹ Yhi-Min Ho, "On Taiwan's Agricultural Transformation Under Colonialism: A Critique" in *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Sep., 1971), pp. 677-678.

¹⁵⁰ Canute VanderMeer and Paul VanderMeer, "Land Property Data on Taiwan" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Nov., 1968), p. 146.

¹⁵¹ Samuel P. S. Ho, "The Economic Development of Colonial Taiwan: Evidence and Interpretation" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (Feb., 1975), pp. 421-426.

¹⁵² Supposedly, Kodama authored a plan for Japan's expansion in 1902. Taiwan was to be the bridge from which troops and spies would be dispatched to the adjacent coveted areas. According to the

certainly though so: “internally we must develop our rule, and externally we must maintain a good-neighbor policy to avoid causing international problems as much as possible while taking measures to control commerce with the Qing and the South Seas” and “the management of the South Seas is still an ideal and is not yet ripe to embark on”.¹⁵³

Kodama during a speech in June 1898 declared: “my duty in Taiwan is to administer, not to conquer”. He continued by explaining to his officers the main goals of his administration: economic development and safety.¹⁵⁴ Thus, Gotō and Kodama were in agreement and set their priorities accordingly: economic development and internal stability in the colony were the requisites for the metropolis’ prosperity and the potential expansion in the South. With this objective in mind they set out to subjugate and “modernize” the Chinese and aborigines, to introduce a modern land registry, to improve the island’s infrastructure, to make the colony economically independent, to boost productivity and to study the local customs after 3 years of administrative mismanagement and failures. In this endeavour Tōkyō’s contribution and aid was not just desired but necessary. Japanese capitalists hesitated to invest in the unruly island and so it was the colonial state that undertook its economic and infrastructural development.¹⁵⁵ The central state had to be Taiwan’s main investor. Infrastructure was the lure used to attract and convince those few Japanese entrepreneurs that had the required business acumen and capital to operate abroad. Until 1899, due to the unequal treaties, Japan was in no position to protect its industry and domestic market through tariffs. In 1895 the country’s industrial base was weak and susceptible to foreign pressures.¹⁵⁶ In an atmosphere of declining public support, Taihoku had difficulties to even borrow or attract capital from Japan. The resources of the island had to be exploited to the fullest to make the colonial endeavour sustainable. Law no. 75 of 20 March 1899 made provisions for the issue of Formosan industrial bonds to the amount of 3,500,000 yen for the purpose of building railways, surveying the land, constructing forts and erecting government buildings. During the

editions of the French newspaper *Echo de Paris* on the 10th, the 11th and the 12th of January 1905, Kodama referred to regions of South East Asia, such as Indochina, the Philippines and South China, as “our future possessions”. A war against France for the occupation of Indochina would be premature in 1902 but it could be carried out with success around 1910. For this purpose, new barracks had to be constructed to accommodate more troops, naval bases had to be built, the ports had to be fortified and an annual military budget of 15 million yen had to be allocated for the transformation of Taiwan into an arms depot. See George Kerr, “Kodama Report: Plan for Conquest” in *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 14, No. 14 (Jul., 1945), pp. 185-187.

¹⁵³ Gotō, “Japan's southward advance”, pp. 17-18.

¹⁵⁴ Lung-chih, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony*, p. 191.

¹⁵⁵ Not only the local Taiwanese but even the Japanese soldiers stationed on the island revolted against their superiors at times proving that the island was a constant warzone. On 30 November 1900, privates of the fifth battalion of the third brigade mutinied and opened fire against their commanders at Shinyeisho. The Governor-General government tried to cover up the incident but it was evident that anarchy ruled over the colony. See “Soldiers’ mutiny in Formosa”, *The Kobe Chronicle*, n. 183 vol. VIII, Wednesday January 2 1901, p. 15.

¹⁵⁶ Chih-ming Ka, *Japanese Colonialism in Taiwan: Land Tenure, Development, And Dependency, 1895-1945*, (Oxford-Boulder, 1995), pp. 49-50.

1900-1906 period, the colonial state, issued bonds with a par value of 25 million yen to boost local entrepreneurship. Between 1896 and 1910 a total sum of around 80 to 90 million yen flowed from the metropolis to the colony.¹⁵⁷

To develop the colony a serious capital influx was required. The two main sources of income for the colony were the Public Loan Bonds and the subsidies by the central government. In 1896 expenses for the war and the colony's administration cost the central government 11% of its annual budget or 18 million yen. From 1895 to 1902 this sum amounted to almost 7% of the national budget. In 1896 Taiwan's military expenses, which were disbursed from a special military budget separate from the colony's budget, accounted for more than half of the island's total expenditures. Taiwan was a serious burden on Japan's economy. Tōkyō had to make the colony financially self-sufficient or abandon the project.¹⁵⁸ Annual administrative expenditures for 1896, 1897, and 1898 were 9.6, 10.4, and 11.2 million yen respectively. 80% of these expenses were allocated for administrative purposes, leaving just 10% for infrastructural and economic projects. Gotō initially asked for a debt issue of 100-150 million yen (deficit financing). The Japanese government would absorb Taiwan's debt issue and within a prescribed period the colonial administration would return this amount with interest to the Japanese government. In order to extract a positive answer from Tōkyō, Gotō limited the sum to 60 million yen. After Ōkuma's succession by Yamagata in November 1898 the issue was reopened. Gotō approached Sakatani Yoshio (1863-1941), an official of the Finance Ministry who told him before departing for Taiwan: "If you need money, please do not hesitate to let me know". Thanks to Sakatani's efforts the Cabinet was persuaded. Gotō's and Kodama's personal ties with other politicians in the diet resulted in the acceptance of the bill on 22 March 1899 but only for 35 million yen on the condition that the colonial government would repay the sum through its own treasury.¹⁵⁹ As a result 68% of government expenses were dedicated to economic projects, three times the amount earmarked for administrative purposes in 1899-1905. In the same period 31.2 million yen were distributed accordingly: 54% for railway construction, 17% for the land survey, 18% for bonds to compensate for annual land payments, 7% for harbour expansions, 4% for government facilities and prisons.¹⁶⁰ The construction of public works mobilized the colonial economy and generated tax income which helped reduce the rampant deficit. Taxes and price control through government monopolies on the island's products was another source of revenue: opium (March 1896), salt (May 1899), camphor (June 1901), tobacco (March 1905)¹⁶¹ and wine (1922).¹⁶² Lastly in

¹⁵⁷ Ho, "The Economic Development", pp. 429-435.

¹⁵⁸ Paul David Barclay, *Japanese and American Colonial Projects: Anthropological Typification in Taiwan and the Philippines*, Ph.D Dissertation University of Minnesota (May 1999), p. 133.

¹⁵⁹ Han-Yu and Myers, "Japanese Colonial Development Policy", pp. 446-447.

¹⁶⁰ Ka, *Japanese Colonialism in Taiwan*, pp. 51-54.

¹⁶¹ A duty of 150% ad valorem was to be put on foreign tobacco because the revenue of the camphor and opium monopolies was at the time insufficient to support the colony's modernization efforts. See "The position of the Formosan revenue proposal to heavily tax tobacco", *The Japan Chronicle*, n. 282, Wednesday 26 November 1902, p. 534.

order to gain more revenue out of the Taiwanese bad habits the colonial government authorized gambling on 22 June 1906.¹⁶³

Other sources of income for the government was the taxation of tea (levied in October 1896), sugar (levied in March 1896), mining (levied in September 1896), registration taxes, custom duties and funds transferred from the previous year's account. Furthermore, the Chinese land taxation system issued in 1886 was employed by the Japanese authorities until 1904 when the "Regulations for Land Taxes" were issued. Initially the taxes on exports and tonnage dues were based on the Chinese practices but the "Regulations for Export and Clearance of Formosa" and the "Regulations concerning Tonnage Dues" were both issued in July 1899. In June 1902, the "Regulations for Tax on Playing Cards" were enforced. In case someone was unable to pay his taxes, his property could be confiscated.¹⁶⁴

In Taiwan the economy was characterized by the predominance of the traditional agricultural sector. In 1901 most of the people lived in rural areas and were absorbed in the agriculture (68% of the total). The agricultural labour force comprised 74% of the total in 1905.¹⁶⁵ Farms existed on a local village scale and were operated for local subsistence.¹⁶⁶ Modern methods were lacking as well as the adaptation and commercialization of the produced goods. The primitive transportation system hindered domestic trade which was less prosperous than the "external" trade with China and other countries.¹⁶⁷ Thus one of the most urgently needed projects was the island's land reform. The colonial government relied on land taxes to reduce the financial strain on Japan. The first three Governor-Generals employed the land system based on the cadastral surveys of the Qing. Hastily, and with inaccurate land records that had been compiled after the war, the first colonial administrators acknowledged the pre-existing land possessions in order to initiate tax collection. As in the Qing era, the land tax was paid by the large land-holders to the central authorities while rents were collected from the "small land-holders", the second owners. The Land Investigation Bureau, established in September 1898, enacted the land survey in the Taihoku area which was carried out in the same manner that it had been performed in Japan proper in 1874.¹⁶⁸ It was extended to northern Taiwan and to the whole island by 1903, boosting the colonial state's revenue. Yet fearing the social disruption that a new land policy could bring, the new reform was fully implemented only in 1905. In preparation, Taihoku expanded the transportation system and built up the police force

¹⁶² Ts'ai, *Taiwan in Japan's Empire*, p. 123.

¹⁶³ Hishida, "Formosa: Japan's First Colony", p. 275.

¹⁶⁴ SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, pp. 27-30.

¹⁶⁵ Shu-Jen Yeh, *Economic growth and the farm economy in colonial Taiwan, 1895-1945*, (Pittsburg 1991), p. 18.

¹⁶⁶ Barclay, *Colonial Development*, p. 18.

¹⁶⁷ Yeh, *Economic growth*, pp. 18-20.

¹⁶⁸ The land tax in Japan had previously eliminated the castes and promoted social unification; now it was to be implemented in the colony. See Komagome, *Shokuminchi teikoku*, p. 34.

in case rebellions broke out. Each prefecture had its branch office and survey teams consisting of clerks, translators, village headmen and technicians. The engineers classified the land according to its productivity, and drew boundaries between towns and villages; every one of them was precisely located and meticulously registered in the new administrative maps. The individuals who actually lived on the land and were recognized by the peasants as the landholders were made the legal owners by buying out the absent holders' rights. Land reform encouraged the creation of small scale family farming rather than the development of large scale plantations. Unclaimed land was considered public property and was transferred to Japanese farmers. Clarifying land ownership, discovering "hidden" lands and increasing tax revenue were not the only goals of the government.¹⁶⁹ Topographical survey, was a tool in finding and eradicating rebel pockets in the island as well. This fact explains the urgency and the scale of the undertaking. 5,225,000 yen were invested in the project which was conducted by a total of 1,670,000 mobilized personnel. The 867,000 acres yielding revenue previously, became 1,866,000 acres under Gotō's direction. 37,896 maps, 9,610 cadasters and 5,624 volumes of land rent registration were accumulated.¹⁷⁰ For the Taiwanese this scientific approach to colonial engineering meant more taxes and further subjugation to Tōkyō's rule. For a Japanese historian "the land survey business had played a decisive role in helping the government-general in Taiwan to control the Han people as well as consolidate its foundation for governing". In addition, the revenue from the land tax rose four-fold between 1896 and 1905, increasing from 752,000 to almost 3 million yen, becoming a major source of income for the colonial regime. Indeed, in 1895-1920 the land tax constituted 34% of the colonial treasury's official income.¹⁷¹ The Taiwanese were taxed more than the Japanese inhabitants of the island and certainly more heavily than they were under the Chinese regime.¹⁷²

The colonial government published in 1896 the "Regulations relating to the Special Disposition, Sale and Letting of Formosan Forests and Plains" and in 1901 the "Regulations for the Formosan Public Reservoirs and Water-Course" to encourage the expansion of the island's agricultural output. Due to these efforts, the arable land was increased and tracts of "wild land" were opened up for the Japanese immigrants and capitalists.¹⁷³ In September 1900, an agricultural association (*nōkai*) was created in San-hsin village of Hai-shan county of the Taihoku district. The association was set up and directed by colonial officials that collaborated with the local landlords and experimented with innovative farming techniques. In the capital, the Central

¹⁶⁹ Kyoji Asada, *Kyū shokuminchi Nihonjin daitochi shoyūron* [The theory of large land ownership in the former Japanese colonies], (Tokyo 1968), pp. 20-21.

¹⁷⁰ Ts'ai, *Taiwan in Japan's Empire*, p. 124-126.

¹⁷¹ Ka, *Japanese Colonialism in Taiwan*, pp. 51-52.

¹⁷² Yao Jen-To, "The Japanese Colonial State and Its Form of Knowledge in Taiwan" in *Taiwan Under Japanese Colonial Rule, 1895-1945: History, Culture, Memory*, ed. L. Ping-Hui, D. Der-wei Wang, (New York, 2006), p. 47-49.

¹⁷³ SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, p. 40.

Agricultural Research Bureau was founded in 1903; it was the first large organization to engage in the scientific study of Taiwan's agriculture. Below this bureau at the district level, experimental agricultural stations were established at Taipei, Hsinchu, Taichū, Tainan, Chiayi, and Kaohsiung with the support of the colonial authorities.¹⁷⁴ The Japanese government, since private initiative was scant, undertook the colony's development. Investments in the island opened new employment opportunities that considerably alleviated the local population's resentment. Taiwan's per capita output growth rate rose from about 0.3% of the late Qing period to more than 2% in the Japanese era, whereas Taiwanese income growth rate per capita rose from 0.3% to 0.94%.¹⁷⁵ Irrigated land increased by almost 30% between 1895 and 1900. Livestock and off farm employment was increasing by 2,65% per annum between 1901 and 1940.¹⁷⁶ Sugar production increased 11-fold over 15 years, and rice production also saw significant increases. In 1900, Taiwan's sugar exports to Japan were valued at 1,538,000 yen while the total of the sugar imports from other sources into Japan proper amounted to 26,607,000 yen.¹⁷⁷ Meiji leaders kept investing, ignoring the grim financial situation and the voices that wanted Taiwan abandoned, so that Taiwan's agricultural potential could be expanded in a way that complemented Japan's industrial development. Therefore, the Taiwanese had to become hard working producers and consumers of the metropolis' commodities. Low cost agricultural goods from the colony such as sugar facilitated the metropolis' shift towards industrial expansion, strengthened capital accumulation for its capitalists and even contributed to the reduction of the Japanese workers' living costs.¹⁷⁸

When the island was ceded to Tōkyō, Chinese officials and intellectuals protested against the "selling of national territory" and dreamt the day when Taiwan would be reunited to the mother country once again. Beijing however, had neglected Taiwan for two centuries having considered it troublesome and a liability, a "ball of mud".¹⁷⁹ Thus in 1895 the island's infrastructure if not ancient, was outmoded. Expenses for education, health, agriculture and transportation comprised roughly 37% of the colonial budget between 1898 and 1905.¹⁸⁰ During the first seven years Tōkyō allocated 35 million yen for the creation of harbours, roads and railways.¹⁸¹ In the colonial capital Taihoku, the new rulers imported Japanized western architectural techniques to raise their own status both internationally and in the colony; the new

¹⁷⁴ Ramon H. Myers and Adrienne Ching, "Agricultural Development in Taiwan under Japanese Colonial Rule" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Aug., 1964), pp. 562-563.

¹⁷⁵ Tsong-Min Wu, "Colonization and Growth: The Case of Taiwan" in *Modern Economic Growth and Distribution in Asia, Latin America and European periphery: A Historical National Accounts Approach*, International Workshop Tokyo 16-18 March 2001, p. 3.

¹⁷⁶ Yeh, *Economic growth*, pp. 117-120.

¹⁷⁷ Catherine Porter, "Korea and Formosa as Colonies of Japan" in *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 5, No. 9 (Apr., 1936), p. 83

¹⁷⁸ Ka, *Japanese Colonialism in Taiwan*, p. 57-59.

¹⁷⁹ Emma Jinhua Teng, "Taiwan in the Chinese Imagination, 17th-19th Centuries" in *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 5, Issue 6 (Jun. 2007), p. 22.

¹⁸⁰ Yeh, *Economic growth*, pp. 117-132.

¹⁸¹ Giichi Ono, *Expenditures of the Sino-Japanese War*, (New York 1922), p. 111.

imperial subjects had to be reminded of their inferior status vis-à-vis the rulers. Boulevards and prestigious public structures were erected in resemblance to Paris' urban organization. The city's walls and Chinese temples that stood in the way of the modern town planning were gradually torn down. Appealing houses for the Japanese officials were built in the new residential districts; a new more impressive official residence for the Governor-General as well as Shintō shrines were created.¹⁸² In order to prevent outbreaks of epidemics and make the road system "adaptable to the life of civilization", public works were necessary. As early as 1895 the drainage-work in Taihoku begun under the direction of the British engineer Barton (William Kinnimond Burton 1856-1899) employed by the Home Ministry. Ten miles of drains along with street paving and improvement in Taihoku cost the government 350,000 yen. The major Taiwanese cities were reshaped to project the rulers' modernity and prestige.¹⁸³ By 1903, Taiwan was electrified, making it the first region in East Asia, after Japan, to be modernized in this way. In the colonial era hospitals, market halls, theatres, assembly halls, parks, post offices, banks, elementary schools, universities and research stations were built for both practical and ideological reasons.¹⁸⁴

By 1905 10,000 kilometers of highways were constructed. The first modern roads were constructed by the army in order to penetrate and pacify the island's interior. A brigadier general was placed in charge of the task of repairing and expanding the roads.¹⁸⁵ The colonial government paid two Japanese steamship companies 800,000 yen annually to connect the island with China and Japan. Keelung harbour was improved and fortified between 1898 and July 1903 at a cost of 2 million yen.¹⁸⁶ In addition the port cities of Tamsui, Takow, and the Pescadores, fortified earlier by the Chinese, were further reinforced by the new rulers. The postal system of mainland Japan was almost entirely adopted by the colonial authorities on 1 April 1896. By 1903 there were 109 post offices in the island. Over 2,000 miles of telegraph and 600 miles of telephone wire, while cables between the colony and Japan were laid.¹⁸⁷ Telephone stations were first built in 1897 in the Pescadores and then in Taiwan.¹⁸⁸

Before 1895 the Chinese had constructed a 42-mile railway line between Keelung and Hsinchu. The private Taiwan Rail Company was set up in the fall of

¹⁸² More than 200 Shrines were built in Taiwan during the colonial period. The first one was erected in 1897 in honour of Kitashirakawa Yoshihisa the first member of the Imperial family to die abroad, of malaria, during the invasion of Taiwan in 1895. See Chang, *Victorian Japan*, p. 322.

¹⁸³ SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, pp. 33-34.

¹⁸⁴ Chang, *Victorian Japan*, pp. 311-321.

¹⁸⁵ SOAS Presbyterian Church of England Foreign Missions Committee Archive, series IV PCE/FCM: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, pp. 38-39.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

¹⁸⁷ Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, p. 622.

¹⁸⁸ SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, p. 64.

1896 but failed to attract funds and was dissolved.¹⁸⁹ Investing 40 million yen the Japanese government built the Taihoku-Takow and Taihoku-Keelung-Tamsui lines in 1904-1905.¹⁹⁰ The line leading from Taihoku to the south cost nearly two million yen. The railway was initially under the direct control of the Military Department. In 1897, it came under the control of the Civil Department with the goal of eventually entrusting the project to a Japanese private railway company. Lack of entrepreneurial initiative propelled the Governor-General Government in 1898 to declare its intention to continue the completion of the railway network itself. Under the direction of Chief Engineer Hasegawa, work was commenced in 1899 on the southern line from Takow leading to Tainan.¹⁹¹

The law for the “Formosan Public Works Loan” sanctioned the budget of 28,800,000 yen for the construction of public railways in Taiwan. As early as September 1895, the government promulgated the “Regulations for Placer Mining and Temporary Mining Industry”. In the same month detailed regulations for the production, protection and control of mining in Taiwan were issued with the ordinance no. 6. The colonial government tried to survey the ores and soil after April 1896 but the endeavour was discontinued in 1897 because of lacking funds. The project was revived in 1905. In 1896 there were 64 mining lots; in 1901, they had increased to 186.¹⁹² On 7 September 1896, the colonial state acquired the propriety of the mines and sold them to Japanese capitalists. Supplementary clauses were amended on 5 October 1898. The fee, that had yet to be determined, would be paid to the colonial government after applying for a license to the prefectural administration. According to the regulations only Japanese subjects could buy and manage the colony’s mines.¹⁹³

Imperial customs houses were built starting from March 1896 in Tamsui, Keelung, Amping, Takow and Tainan. At the time of the occupation the Chinese custom duties were adopted. In February 1896, the custom laws and regulations in force in Japan were applied to the colony as well. In July 1899 the rate of custom duties were applied so that the custom duties became identical with the ones of the mother country with the exception of export and clearance duties.¹⁹⁴ To simplify and promote trade the first Governor-General issued ordinance no. 19 called the “Regulation for the Sale of Weights and Measures in Formosa” in October 1895. The

¹⁸⁹ Lone, *Army, Empire*, p. 57.

¹⁹⁰ Hishida, “Formosa: Japan's First Colony”, p. 277.

¹⁹¹ Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, p. 620.

¹⁹² SOAS PCE-FMC, series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, “Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)”, Japanese Government, 1909, pp. 51-52.

¹⁹³ The Fujita company from Ōsaka was the first to engage in quartz mining in Taiwan in December 1896. By March 1896 at Pangliao, a Japanese merchant called Yamada engaged in coal mining. In every mine, the Japanese were the supervisors while the labour force was mainly Chinese; Japanese labourers were paid more. See Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, pp. 466-488.

¹⁹⁴ SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, “Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)”, Japanese Government, 1909, p. 68.

system was completed after the supplementary November 1900 law that was put in practice after May 1901.¹⁹⁵

In July 1895, a Sanitary Bureau was created. In March 1896 the sanitation of the entire island, except the one pertaining to the military, came under the Civil Affairs' jurisdiction. Sewages were inexistent and the Taiwanese used to drink dirty water from muddy rivers. A sewage system was established initially in Taihoku and later in other cities; wells were constructed as well. Regulations for the prevention of infectious diseases were handed out and in 1898 the island's medical network organization was laid out in the Regulations for the Taiwan Public Physicians' Candidates. In May 1896, hospitals were built in Taihoku, Taichū and Tainan and in every other district, Pescadores included, as diagnostical centres sprung out. Nearly half a million yen was allocated for the construction of hospital buildings, the Taihoku hospital costing \$262,000 as the largest. A medical school was established in 1899 to prepare young physicians for their arduous tasks in a semi-tropical territory. Due to these provisions, the mortality rate dropped every year after 1899. In addition, the practice of female infanticide by the poorer families fell in the decline under the Japanese rule.¹⁹⁶

The Japanese struggled to make Taiwan a healthier place to live and a welcoming ground for entrepreneurial activities that would encourage Japanese immigration and investments.¹⁹⁷ Davidson set the Japanese population of the island, besides the military, to 40,000 in 1903. The majority of them originated from Kyūshū in south Japan. In 1900, Japanese males had reached the number of 13,316 and the females to 5,680, a total of 18,996. In 1899, there were 8,601 males, and 2,544 females, a total of 11,145.¹⁹⁸ In 1906 a few farm families migrated to Taiwan under the auspices of the colonial government. In 1909 the authorities tried to attract more Japanese by offering plots of land to immigrants that would create permanent settlements that would develop the island's eastern part; that year there were 790 Japanese farmers in the colony. By 1911 only 231 Japanese agricultural families had

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 63.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 20-23. Many modern Taiwanese influenced by these figures and the presumed modernization and development that the Japanese brought in the island expressed their sympathy for Tōkyō's rule. It is probably the only case that a sizeable part of the colonized nurtures warm feelings for its oppressors. See Chih Huei Huang, "Ethnic Diversity, Two-Layered Colonization, and Modern Taiwanese Attitudes toward Japan", in *Japanese Taiwan: Colonial Rule and its Contested Legacy*, ed. A. D. Morris, (London-New York 2005), p. 134.

¹⁹⁷ Few Japanese decided to move to the colony due to its unhealthy and tropical climate. In addition, parts of South China, which were targets of Japanese expansionism, were overpopulated and destitute, unsuitable as outlets for the metropolis' population. See "Japan and the partition of China", *The Kobe chronicle*, n. 164 vol. VII, Wednesday 22 August 1900, pp. 161-162. Uchida, the Japanese Minister to Beijing after 1901, thought differently. He believed that business opportunities in China should not be abandoned to westerners and as many as Japanese as possible should settle in the country. See "Japan in China, views of the Minister at Peking", *The Japan Chronicle*, n. 280, Wednesday 12 November 1902, p. 477.

¹⁹⁸ Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, p. 594.

settled in Taiwan.¹⁹⁹ It is evident that Taiwan was not able to accommodate Japan's surplus population as many imperial advocates had claimed before 1895. Japanese immigrants despite Tōkyō's promises and facilitations in Taiwan kept flocking to Australia and North America. From 1896, when the first civilians were permitted to enter the colony, and until 1942 the Japanese population of the island never exceeded 6% of the total population.²⁰⁰

In November 1895, the ordinance regarding the Taiwanese prisons and the provisional prison regulation were issued. In June 1896, the first prisons were built in Taihoku and 20 other places. In February 1899, the management of the prisons was placed under the direct jurisdiction of the Governor-General. In the same year projects for a new prison were laid down with an approximate cost of 800,000 yen. Corporal punishment and manual labour were common in these institutions.²⁰¹ Police administration was established with the arrival of the first inspectors at Taihoku in July 1895, attached to the Civil Administration Department.²⁰² Under Gotō the police's role was greatly enhanced. From 3,020 patrolmen in 1897 the figure rose to 4,061 in 1899. A police academy established in June 1898 ensured the officers' high standard training. From 1898 to 1904 the expenditure regarding the police accounted for 40-48% of the total civil administration expenditure. Some 1,254 or 23.2% of the total in 1900 were Taiwanese that were employed as patrolmen,²⁰³ but top administration posts remained in Japanese hands. Policemen were paid a handsome salary and were promised attractive promotions. Each pocket of resistance was isolated and eliminated from north to south and by 1903 the last group surrendered in Tainan to the local militia and police.²⁰⁴ The Police Headquarters was erected in 1901 within the Civil Affairs Department. However, the Police came to be more important than the civil administration and it was expanded to an unprecedented level according to paragraph 22 of the November 1901 revision ("Bureaucratic system of the government-general of Taiwan"). With the 1901 reform the Governor-General split

¹⁹⁹ Lamley, *The Taiwan Literati*, p. 316. In 1905 the Japanese were only 57,309, less than 2% of the total population. 40% of them were self-employed or colonial officials while 1.4% was employed in agriculture, fisheries and forestry. In 1898 the Japanese permanently settled in Taiwan were 13,214 with 3,078 leaving that year. In 1899 the arrivals amounted to 20,743 while 7,903 returned to Japan. In 1900, 20,995 arrived and 8,842 left. The respective number for the next 4 years are: 17,841 and 14,054 for 1901. 13,821 and 11,478 for 1902. 15,892 and 13,149 for 1903. 11,564 and 12,155 for 1904. This high rate of voluntary withdrawal is explained by the fact that the Japanese immigrants that came after 1895 found the best plots of land occupied by the Chinese. Additionally, malaria and brigandage forced the majority of the aspiring colonists to return to Japan. See Ellen Churchill Semple, "Japanese Colonial Methods" in *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (1913), pp.273-274. The Japanese newspaper *The Kobe Chronicle* set the number of the Japanese houses in Taiwan in 1899 to 2,247. The total Japanese population in 1900 was 7,402 according to the editor. See "The Japanese population in Formosa", *The Kobe Chronicle*, n. 143 vol. VI, Wednesday March 28 1900, p. 251.

²⁰⁰ Xiong, *Representing Empire*, pp. 12-13.

²⁰¹ SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, p. 77.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁰³ Local Taiwanese were added to the force after the junior grade of assistant patrolmen was established in 1899. See Lamley, "Taiwan under Japanese rule", p. 213.

²⁰⁴ Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, pp. 180-181.

Taiwan into two areas of police jurisdiction, each directed by a police superintendent (keishi). The box system was adopted and during the first year of this reform, 101 dispersed police boxes were constructed. The reorganization systematized the appointment of policemen in the central administration thus making it impossible in the later years to separate the two branches. As with the police, the branch-prefecture chiefs were also given in October 1901 the power to intrude in numerous aspects of the private life. They were charged with tasks concerning the aboriginal lands, the forests, the mines and even the tax administration. The 1901 local reform instituted 20 prefectures on the island; this system would be maintained until 1909. Senior or junior officials that had served in the colonial bureaucracy for 5 years could be appointed prefectural chiefs, in line with the “Special appointment order of local staff of the government-general of Taiwan”. The same apparatus was employed to promote police officers with 5 years of service to police inspectors. The appointment of the latter as sub-prefectural chiefs was institutionalized by the 1901 reform, making the following years even more difficult to separate local civil administration from police administration.²⁰⁵

All these tasks were entrusted to Japanese colonial officials, carefully selected and trained after the establishment of a corps of career civil servants by Gotō. High standards for the employment of officials meant the blocking of further entry or the expulsion of Japanese adventurers seeking “golden opportunities” in Taiwan’s administration.²⁰⁶ The first colonial functionaries can be divided in three categories: technical support, administrative assistance and police. Most of the candidates that took the general examination to find employment in the colonial government were teachers, police officers and correction officers.²⁰⁷ Their privileged status over the locals gave to many a sense of superiority and satisfaction. Many of them were ex-samurai; their adherence to bushido values was translated into the military’s prevalence over civil administration in the colony.²⁰⁸ Government officials enjoyed special treatment. Depending on their years of service and family members they received payment, medical treatment under Taihoku’s expenses and frequent leaves of absence.²⁰⁹ The functionaries that were eventually appointed in the colony were looked down upon by their colleagues in Japan proper who used demeaning terms to describe them. Japanese citizens residing in the colony “were considered lesser

²⁰⁵ Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai, “Shaping administration in colonial Taiwan, 1895-1945” in *Taiwan Under Japanese Colonial Rule, 1895–1945: History, Culture, Memory*, ed. L. Ping-Hui, D. Der-wei Wang, (New York, 2006), pp. 100-101.

²⁰⁶ Kublin, “Taiwan's Japanese Interlude”, p. 321.

²⁰⁷ The first examination for civilian officials took place in 1899. However, the practice of “special appointments” for the policemen was still widespread. See Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai, “The Shaping of Colonial Administrators: The Lower Civil Service Examination in Taiwan under Japanese Rule” International Conference, Prague, April 18-20, 2008, pp. 2-6.

²⁰⁸ Zagarola, *Taiwan-Formosa*, vol. 2, p. 252.

²⁰⁹ SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, “Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)”, Japanese Government, 1909, p. 13.

citizens, the dropouts of Japanese society”.²¹⁰ During the entire colonial period only 32 Taiwanese passed the upper civil service examination and were employed by the colonial state.²¹¹ Many of the officials in Taiwan came from Japan’s other colony, Okinawa. These bureaucrats, assimilated already into the Japanese culture and mind-set would now try to transform the Taiwanese into loyal and law abiding imperial subjects.²¹² In the coming years Taiwanese would be employed as colonial agents in Manchuria in what the historian Masao Maruyama (1914-1996) described as “the transfer of oppression”.²¹³

Taiwan was gradually becoming a police-state. The 1900 Taiwan Press Law placed the Press in Taiwan under central control and censorship. In the same year the Taiwan Peace Preservation Regulation that mirrored the law that was in force in Japan from 1887 to 1898 was enacted. This Regulation gave to the colonial authorities the right to expel from the island anyone that misbehaved.²¹⁴ Chinese language newspapers were circulating in Taiwan but were not allowed to express any hostility towards the colonial regime. In 1899 Gotō shut down two newspapers critical of his policies and inaugurated the *Taiwan Nichi Nichi Shimpō*, to praise and serve the colonial administration. Later Japanese newspapers, backed up financially by Taihoku, would naturally praise the educational efforts and Taiwan’s unprecedented

²¹⁰ The author Uchida Roan (1868-1929) wrote in 1902: “Those who went to Taiwan, if they were bureaucrats, were either those who had failed in their careers or those who got demoted. If they were commoners, then it would be those who could not make a living or con artists. All of them were badgers dressed in human skin. Not one person there is honest and sincere in working hard... In Taiwan, government officials and rich people, even if they did something horrible, would never get arrested. They commit crimes openly. Honest people are driven out of the place because they are in their way. As a consequence, decent gentlemen that they once were, upon landing in Keelung, they would be corrupted by the Taiwanese way as quickly as they would become infected by malaria”. See Faye Yuan Kleeman, *In Transit: The Formation of a Colonial East Asian Cultural Sphere*, (Honolulu 2014), p. 162.

²¹¹ Ts’ai, *Taiwan in Japan’s Empire*, p. 55. Nevertheless, the Taiwanese had the right to participate in a civil affairs normal examination in order to be appointed in the lower echelons of the colonial administration. See Yamada, *Nihon no Chōsen, Taiwan*, p. 45.

²¹² Komegome, *Shokuminchi teikoku*, p. 45.

²¹³ In this light, one can argue that eastern Japan and Hokkaidō pre-Tokugawa were subjugated and assimilated by the new Meiji government which was composed mainly by men from Chōshū and Satsuma in South-Western Japan. The Japanese people were the first targets of the government’s colonizing-civilizing mission (internal colonialism) even before they began colonizing foreign peoples. Through military conquest (Boshin War), the spread of a national language and the construction of a common identity the Meiji leaders incorporated potentially unstable peripheral territories; first the rest of Japan, then the pre-modern colonies of Hokkaidō and the Ryūkyūs to check the Russian and Chinese aspirations, and later on, other territories as beachheads for further expansion. This hierarchical relation of ruler and subordinate can be traced back to Japan’s traditional social structure. See Wu Rwei-Ren, *The Formosan Ideology: Oriental Colonialism and the Rise of Taiwanese Nationalism, 1895-1945*, VOL. 1, Ph.D Dissertation Chicago, Illinois (2003), pp. 72-73.

²¹⁴ Wang, *Legal reform*, p. 48. Some of the departed or expelled unruly elements continued to harass the Japanese authorities in Taiwan by their new bases in China, particularly in Amoy. It was there that the insurgent named Kan dai-shi was arrested on 13 March 1900 and deported back to Taiwan to be imprisoned. See “A Formosan rebel arrested at Amoy”, *The Kobe Chronicle*, n. 142, Vol. V, Wednesday 21 March 1900, p. 238.

economic development. Those articles also pointed out the backwardness of the island before 1895 elevating Japanese successes. Chinese practices and customs as the infamous foot binding, deemed as primitive were criticized whereas adoption of Japan's civilized and modern culture was lauded. The previous Qing functionaries were criticized as corrupt and the resources of the fertile island wasted because of their misappropriation and oppression.²¹⁵ The Japanese *Taiwan Shinpō* edition of 15 December 1896 stated that Taiwan by becoming Japan's colony had risen in status and finally appeared in the world stage.²¹⁶ Some western reporters adopted the rhetoric.²¹⁷ The Taiwanese and some Japanese²¹⁸ were not so enthusiastic about the colonial rule however. A contemporary popular song during Kodama's administration mentioned the hardships and poverty of the island's farmers.²¹⁹

On the eve of the Japanese colonial period, Taiwan's monetary system had been almost entirely metallic, and paper money was virtually unknown to most of the local population.²²⁰ At the time of the Japanese occupation in Taiwan a broad number of coins were in circulation: Qing and foreign paper money, "republican" coins, the local Tamsui tael, the Mexican dollar and even convertible bank notes and coins of the Bank of Japan used by the provisional Japanese government. Although Japan had changed its currency system to the gold standard in October 1897, silver currency continued to circulate in Taiwan further contributing to a state of confusion. In 1898 after examining carefully the conditions in the island, Tōkyō decided to adopt one-yen silver coins as the standard ratio to gold to be fixed occasionally by the Governor-General government. The Bank of Taiwan issued bank notes convertible to one-yen

²¹⁵ William Alexander Pickering, *Pioneering in Formosa: recollections of adventures among mandarins, wreckers, & head-hunting savages*, (London, 1898), pp. 90-92.

²¹⁶ Chang, *Marshaling Culture*, pp. 45-47.

²¹⁷ James Davidson was an American correspondent hired by the Japanese to document favourably the 1895 invasion. In his reports, he used to criticize the former Qing administration and praise Tōkyō's efforts to develop the island. In addition, he failed to mention the massacres inflicted upon the South Taiwanese in the summer of 1896. The China based *North China Herald* and other British newspapers were also evidently pro-Japanese after the 1902 Anglo-Japanese Alliance. They stressed the organization and administrative abilities of their new allies. See "The Alliance with Japan", *Lancashire Evening Post*, Friday 28 February 1902, p. 2, "The Alliance", *Lincolnshire Echo*, Monday 17 February 1902, p. 2 and "That Alliance", *Western Times*, Friday 14 February 1902, p. 16.

²¹⁸ Two Japanese residents (Hagiwara and Kobayashi) travelled in 1902 to Tōkyō in order to reveal the island's real conditions. They lamented the perpetuation of the military law in Taiwan and the "despotic authority" of the colonial officials. The Governor-General was disregarding the needs of the Japanese inhabitants, deported any dissidents and promoted the interests of his clique. The Japanese, the Japanized Taiwanese and the ordinary Taiwanese in the island did not enjoy any right. Hagiwara and Kobayashi requested full rights and the right of representation at least for the first two categories; the colonial state's arbitrariness and abuse suffocated the colonizers and subordinated voices alike. See "The condition of Formosa, rights of residents, an interview with a deputation", *The Japan Chronicle*, n. 236, Wednesday 8 January 1902, p. 8. On the other hand, the Taiwanese through petitions and the creation of an association with the goal of promoting the establishment of a Taiwan parliament in the 1920s tried to gain voice and political rights from the metropolis; none of these efforts moved the Japanese diet. See Lamley, "Taiwan under Japanese rule", p. 233.

²¹⁹ Lone, *Army, Empire*, p. 57.

²²⁰ Niv Horesh, "Between Copper, Silver and Gold: Japanese Banks of Issue in Taiwan, Northeast China and Korea, 1879-1937", in *China Report*, 48: 4 (2012), pp. 383-384.

silver coin, called silver notes, but failed to gain the trust of the Taiwanese. In March 1897, law 38 entitled: “Regulation for the Bank of Taiwan” authorized the bank to issue banknotes and exchange these notes for the one-yen silver coin. The Bank was formally instituted in June 1899.²²¹ A new bimetallic system was introduced. The Bank, that had branches in Taiwan²²² and China (Amoy, Hong Kong) alike,²²³ also took charge of the colony’s treasury and was under the control of the government. It was established to “facilitate and encourage Japanese business in Taiwan”. The colonial government facing economic difficulties declared in March 1898 that it was accepting silver coins for tax purposes.²²⁴ This chaotic situation was further exacerbated in June 1904 when the Bank of Taiwan attempted to issue currency on the basis of gold. By 1906, four parallel types of money were circulating on the island. The First World War brought inflation that threatened the stable circulation of hard cash.²²⁵

The problem of opium use was one of Taiwan’s most crucial social problems at the time of the Japanese annexation. An outright ban of the drug would intensify the unrest and the anti-Japanese feeling. The Japanese thought that they might as well gain something out of it. In contrast to what they did in Qing China the treaty powers in Japan pledged to prohibit the exportation of opium. Meiji Japan was the fit abstinent state that had to cure the ailing, addicted and hopeless nations of Asia. After 1895, opium use in Taiwan became a Japanese problem as well; 170,000 or 6% of the population were addicts in the first years of the occupation. Gotō’s plan for the opium, formulated even before his appointment in 1898 and already espoused in 1896 by Mizuno Jun, was to monopolize the manufacture, control and circulation of the drug. This way licensed smokers were administered limited quantities reducing the amount over time. According to Gotō’s plan, opium could contribute annually 1,6 million yen to the government. The Taiwan Opium Law was put in effect in April 1897. By 1901 the Opium Monopoly Bureau was established by the Governor-General administration. The latter granted opium selling licenses to almost 1,000 members of the Taiwanese elite. Arrests for violations of the Opium Law decreased spectacularly from 1,046 in 1901 to 56 in 1905. *Taiwan nippō*, the Japanese newspaper edited by

²²¹ It was not the first bank to operate in the colony. Ōsaka’s Churitsu Bank opened a branch in Keelung in September 1895. After September 1898, the Kagi Bank (joint capital) and the Shoka Bank (stock company) started their operations in the colony. See SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, “Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)”, Japanese Government, 1909, pp. 31-33.

²²² Under Juichi Soyeda (1864-1929), who served as its first president, the bank’s expansion to Swatow, Keelung and Taichū was carried out. See “The bank of Taiwan”, *The Kobe Chronicle*, n. 144 vol. VI, Wednesday April 4 1900, Wednesday March 28 1900, p. 276.

²²³ The Bank of Taiwan’s charter of 1897, 2 years before the actual opening of the bank, stated: “The Bank’s business will expand into the South China area and the South Sea islands, and the Bank will act as an organ to assist commercial trading with those countries”. See Gotō, “Japan’s southward advance”, p. 17.

²²⁴ According to the law n. 35 of 1 March 1899, 2 million yen of silver were loaned to the bank without interest to be used exclusively as a reserve fund for the conversion of notes. See Ono, *Expenditures*, pp. 185-188.

²²⁵ Ts’ai, *Taiwan in Japan’s Empire*, pp. 126-127.

Naitō Torajirō or Konan (1866-1934), was portraying Taihoku's policy as a humanitarian act to save the "backward" locals.²²⁶ For Katō Hisayuki, a bureaucrat of the Home Ministry Sanitation Bureau in 1906, preservation of the harmful habit was contrary to Japan's civilizing mission in the colony.²²⁷ Despite the criticisms, the practice continued, yielding positive results; according to official records, by September 1901 37,072 people had stopped smoking opium. The number of opium addicts, which was 170,000 in 1900, dropped to 130,000 in 1905.²²⁸ Before 1925 the income derived by the opium monopoly was 40% of the annual special budget of the colonial government. Control of the addicts, the inspection of their names, addresses, and licenses was naturally assigned to the police.²²⁹

Besides opium and camphor, which we will examine later in relation to the aborigine problem, sugar was the most profitable sector of Japan's economic activity in early colonial Taiwan.²³⁰ Initially due to the hostilities, in 1900 the island's sugar production fell to 63% of that of 1895. In 1901 the agronomist Nitobe Inazō was appointed to promote and experiment on Taiwan's sugar production. From 1902 to 1904 as head of the Taiwan Sugar Business Bureau, he carried out his ideas: new seeds were used in experimental stations, water and fertilizer inputs increased, and additional modern mills built.²³¹ A training school for sugar engineers and a Cane Experiment Center were later created. His efforts and the colonial government's guarantee of the average profit for the first investor, providing a subsidy equal to 6% of the capital invested in five years, almost immediately attracted Japanese capital. Irrigation, transportation and raw materials were promised as well.²³² Modern refining machines were leased to the farmers and subsidies for irrigation works were granted by the colonial regime. In 1900 the Seitō Kaisha Ltd company with a paid-in capital of 500,000 yen, created the first large scale factory in Kaohsiung. These enterprises enjoyed the Bank of Taiwan's favourable terms of financing, besides Taihoku's generous assistance.²³³ 2,500 acres of land were donated to the company. Another sugar plant was created at Kyoshito near Takow on 11 December 1901. The biggest shareholders were the Imperial Household and the Mitsui Company.²³⁴ The sugar industry's growth as well as the economy's as a whole had little impact upon the

²²⁶ Three specialized clinics for chronic opium users were opened in Keelung, Tainan and Taihoku, staffed by doctors that came from the mainland to treat and study the phenomenon. See SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, p. 23.

²²⁷ Miriam Kingsberg, "Abstinent Nation, Addicted Empire: Opium and Japan in the Meiji Period" in *Social History of Alcohol and Drugs*, Volume 25 (2011), pp. 88-97.

²²⁸ Semple, "Japanese Colonial Methods", p. 271.

²²⁹ Ts'ai, *Taiwan in Japan's Empire*, p. 113.

²³⁰ In the long run other products such as indigo and salt could yield sizeable profits for the colony according to Kodama. See "The resources of Formosa", *The Kobe Chronicle*, n. 150, vol. VI, Wednesday 16 May 1900, p. 418.

²³¹ SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, pp. 55-56.

²³² Ka, *Japanese Colonialism in Taiwan*, pp. 75-76.

²³³ Asada, *Kyū shokuminchi*, pp. 13-14.

²³⁴ Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, pp. 452-454.

locals. For the islanders, the only available occupation was farming since all business and government posts were taken by the colonizers. The Taiwanese farmers, with the 1902 “Regulations for the Encouragement of the Sugar Business”, had to sell their cash crops to designated Japanese capitalists. They also had to comply with production quotas and pay heavy taxes in order to retain their property. Through monopolies and oligopolies Tōkyō came to control the colony’s economy and all profits were absorbed by the colonial regime and the Japanese businessmen. While trade with the metropolis was timidly expanding²³⁵ the Taiwanese peasants continued living at subsistence levels.²³⁶ Taiwanese educator Lim Bo-Seng admitted around 1900 that the Japanese were in charge of the commercial and industrial operations whereas manual labour activities such as farming were entirely left for the local population.²³⁷

In 1904 Kodama was in a position to decline half of Tōkyō’s subsidies; henceforth Taiwan would be financially sufficient and not a burden to the national treasury. Taiwan had become financially independent.²³⁸ Gotō and Kodama, their priority of exploiting the island’s resources aside, had also to pacify and govern the local population which was still unruly. For this reason, they employed the carrot and stick strategy; modern, humane and enlightened measures were accompanied by police oppression and the military’s brutality.

Next, the unequal relation between the colonizers and the colonized, both Chinese and aborigines, will be presented. The lack of a national identity and of a pre-colonial political order facilitated Japanese occupation and assimilation. The Chinese inhabitants during the Qing period identified themselves as Hoklos and Hakkas based on their place of ancestry. When the colonial state enacted legislation treating them as equal subjects a new common identity started taking shape. In addition, the Japanese did their utmost to treat them as a different national body in their effort to shatter their long cultural ties with China. The presence of the foreign Japanese signified the fostering of a distinct national consciousness that came to be “Taiwanese”. The Japanese used the term Taiwanese in their census reports and “islanders” or “natives” in common speech.²³⁹

²³⁵ In 1897 exports from Japan to Taiwan reached the amount of 3,723,721 yen while imports into Japan from the colony accounted for 2,014,648 yen. In 1898 these figures were 4,266,768 yen and 4,142,778 yen respectively. In 1899, 8,011,826 and 3,650,475, in 1900 8,439,033 and 4,402,110, in 1901 8,782,258 and 7,345,956 and finally in 1902 import trade reached the value of 9,235,290 yen and exports accounted for 7,407,498. See Ono, *Expenditures*, p. 230. However, the increase of these figures can be misleading; in the period 1896-1900 imports from Japan made up only 27% of the total on the average, while exports only 19,6%. See Grajdanzev, *Formosa Today*, p. 145.

²³⁶ Marco Antonio Guzman, *Imposing Capitalism: Japanese and American Colonialism in Taiwan, the Philippines, and Cuba, 1890s-1920s*, Ph.D Dissertation, University of California (2015), pp. 55-66.

²³⁷ Takeshi Komagome, “Colonial Modernity for an Elite Taiwanese, Lim Bo-seng: The Labyrinth of Cosmopolitanism” in *Taiwan Under Japanese Colonial Rule, 1895–1945: History, Culture, Memory*, ed. L Ping-Hui, D. Der-wei Wang, (New York, 2006), pp. 145-146.

²³⁸ Lamley, *The Taiwan Literati*, p. 296.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 294-295.

Taiwan's colonial authorities calculated Taiwanese losses during the first 6 months of the conflict to 10,000 dead and 8,000 prisoners. From 1895 to 1902 there are 8,000 clashes documented between locals and colonial troops.²⁴⁰ These conflicts were of local rather than island-wide proportions. The Japanese authorities, due to the absence of a unified rebel authority, had to deal with each resistance group separately. On the other hand, the exodus of Chinese loyalist literati and gentry after the signing of the 1895 treaty signified that many of the potential leaders of opposition could not harass the Japanese administration. Many of those that chose to remain in the island recognized the new colonial regime and even collaborated with it.²⁴¹ In 1899 Japan enacted the Nationality Law (*kokusekihō*) granting nominally Japanese nationality to its Taiwanese subjects. However, the main criterion to award nationality, the family register system based on the Family Register Law of 1871 was never enforced in the colonies.²⁴² Legally only a "child whose father was Japanese" was considered Japanese. On 27 March 1896, Taiwan's Civil Governor Mizuno Jun announced that the rights and duties of imperial subjects were not effective in the colony. Thus, the Taiwanese were now only partial Japanese like the Ainus or Okinawans. In the summer of 1899 the Japanese government announced that the inhabitants of the island had Japanese "status" and that the constitution "had already been extended to Taiwan".²⁴³

The most famous apparatus of colonial control over the Taiwanese subjects is the *baojia* or *hokō* system. A similar system of collective responsibility was in existence in Tokugawa Japan known as *Gonin Gumi*. In the summer of 1896, the head of the Bureau of Home Affairs, Furushō Kamon (1840-1915) met an elderly man in south Taiwan, who suggested the employment of the ancient *baojia* system as a means to pacify the island. Furushō supposedly took the man's advice and organized the local self-defence forces of a friendly village in the Chiayi area of central Taiwan under the oversight of the police. By September, the guerillas in the area were dispersed and the experiment was deemed successful. The Governor of Taihoku followed suit: On 29 October 1896 Furushō spread implemented the system of local armed protection to the entire island. A set of criteria for the organization of "self-rule" and "self-defense association" were put in place. The system was put in effect in 1896 but it was only after 1898 that its potential as a local policing institution was realized and efficiently employed. The system was institutionalized in August 1898 with a law passed by Governor-General Kodama. The joint responsibility structure was enforced only to the Chinese settlements. During the following years all local governments organized their respective communities under the *hokō* system in line with Taihoku's supplementary regulations. Ten households comprised one *kō*, and ten

²⁴⁰ According to Japanese sources during this period 32,000 Taiwanese had been killed. See Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, p. 122.

²⁴¹ Michael Hechter, Ioana Emy Matesan and Chris Hale, "Resistance to alien rule in Taiwan and Korea" in *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 15 (1), (2009), pp. 39-46.

²⁴² Asano, *Shokuminchi Teikoku*, pp. 4-5.

²⁴³ Nomura, "Making the Japanese Empire", pp. 67-76.

kō formed one ho. Every ho and kō unit was headed by an elected agent for two years; the results of the elections had to be announced and approved by the local Japanese authorities. If the latter found the candidate unsuitable, new unit elections were ordered. These headmen were usually Taiwanese elders (hosei) that with the passing of the time came to be identified as the local elite. Under this system village-level militias (sōteidan or able-bodied corps) were developed as an auxiliary force to the Japanese police.²⁴⁴ These militias were mobilized against rioters and bandits offering to the Japanese valuable assistance in thwarting guerilla activities. An average company was comprised of 40 men between the ages of 17 to 40. The local police chief trained, supervised and equipped these men whenever necessary. The system was so efficient that by 1903 the Japanese were committing only 30,000 men (army, police) to control a population of 3 million inhabitants. Patrolling and maintaining social security was not the only task of the hosei collaborators. Sanitation measures, agricultural instructions, precautions against natural disasters and bandit activity, monitoring of population movement, tax collection,²⁴⁵ close collaboration with the local police and frequent reporting of suspicious activities, household registrations, and dealing with crimes and riots were enforced through the system. When someone living in a kō was found guilty for an offence or for breaking the hokō rules, each household head was fined for his failure to inform the authorities. Furthermore, locals were selected through the system and forced to repair and built roads and bridges. Expenses were paid by the households. The headmen were not paid but were given gifts and certain privileges such as business opportunities or appointments to government posts.²⁴⁶ In late 1901 in central-south Taiwan a local riot erupted and many Japanese officials were murdered by the insurgents. The village of Puzijiao was required to pay an enormous fine of 2,400 as it had been negligent by “not keeping the unrest from developing into a riot” and for not notifying the local authorities.²⁴⁷

Another instrument of control was the re-implementation of old Taiwanese customs. By reviving familiar institutions employed by the previous Qing administration Taihoku found a way to pacify the local population, clarify the land propriety rights on the island and set up an acceptable legal framework. Gotō believed that the compilation of records for Taiwan’s land and populace was economically and politically wise. After his appointment, he invited academics from Japan to study

²⁴⁴ Gotō made the following comments about the hokō: "Indeed, the restoration of order and the success of the present administration are largely due to this institution of sōteidan [militia] and the cooperation of the native Chinese inhabitants [the Taiwanese] with the sōtei [militiamen]". He later wrote: "this institution [the hokō system] has been powerful enough to keep the native insurgents in check and preserve the peace of the community". See Chen, "The Japanese Adaptation of the Pao-Chia System", p. 401.

²⁴⁵ The Japanese bureaucrat Tsurumi Yūsuke commented on the matter: "It is due to this system [the hokō] that, though the Formosans are rather heavily taxed, comparatively few fail to pay". The Taiwanese critics denounced a system that spread suspicion and transformed neighbours into spies. For them punishments were arbitrarily imposed and labour work restricted the inhabitants’ freedom in a discriminatory manner. See Ibid., pp. 406-408.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 393-398.

²⁴⁷ Ts’ai, *Taiwan in Japan’s Empire*, pp. 98-107.

Taiwan's customs and traditional laws. Nakamura Zekō as the head of land investigation bureau was the first to study the local population's customs in 1898. In November 1901 the endeavour was intensified; a committee "for the investigation of old customs and practices" (Rinji Taiwan kyūkan chōsakai) was established with the task of studying and codifying of Qing-era laws. The commission was formally instituted by the imperial ordinance no. 196 of 1901. Its highest decision-making organ was a 15-member committee headed by the chief civil administrator. Initially, work was divided between two divisions; the first one was in charge of the legal system and the second of the economy. The scholar Okamatsu Santarō (1871-1921)²⁴⁸ was made chief of the first section and Naoya Akuzawa handled the second. Each division appointed a member in charge of a team of researchers, clerks and interpreters. Chinese were hired to assist the Japanese personnel in translating old Qing codes and collecting information during their field trips in Taiwan and southern China. The headquarters were at Taihoku with branches at Taichū and Tainan. A designated department in Japan, at Kyōto Imperial University, was the "intellectual nerve center". The commission's research topics reveal Gotō's political priorities. Besides the researchers' reports he tried indirectly to demonstrate that Taiwanese customs were different from the ones practiced in the mainland China thus discrediting any cultural ties and stating that assimilation was feasible.²⁴⁹ The second section after studying credit, commerce and property systems, concluded its tasks in 1905 and was disbanded. The legislature section examined the private law practices regarding land and civil affairs (inheritance, marriage, family), as well as affairs concerning administration and business.²⁵⁰ The aim of this large-scale scientific undertaking was the consolidation of Japanese rule. The Japanese colonial-state deeply penetrated the everyday life of common people. Okamatsu Santarō through his research and field trips provided the colonial authorities with information and recommendations to better understand and control the local population. Okamatsu believed the Japanese laws to be very sophisticated for Taiwan, being products of western legislation. Long enduring traditions were gradually prohibited as they were considered incompatible with the modern and scientific Japanese patterns.²⁵¹

²⁴⁸ Okamatsu virtually became Gotō's legal advisor. In 1901, he was instructed by the Chief of Civil Affairs to submit a law proposal to replace the troublesome law 63. The "Taiwan Governance Law" was drafted in 1904 in time for the diet's 21th session. With this bill, Gotō tried to make Taiwan's "special rule" permanent, separating the colony decisively from the Japanese state, in line with British example. The draft was not endorsed by the diet. Okamatsu also proposed a modification to the Meiji constitution according to which the existence of colonial territories within the Japanese empire would have to be formally and legally recognized as such. The "Taiwan Governance Law" proposed the Governor-General's equalization with the Cabinet Ministers. Furthermore, it abolished the constitution's application in Taiwan virtually giving legal autonomy to the colonial authorities. In addition, it provided for the Governor-General government financial independence from Tokyo: it could issue bonds, obtain property and devise its budget without any interference from the diet. Law 63 was finally revised in February 1906. See Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, p. 94.

²⁴⁹ Timothy Y. Tsu, "Japanese colonialism and the investigation of Taiwanese 'old customs'", in *Anthropology and Colonialism in Asia and Oceania*, ed. J. Van Bremen and A. Shimizu, (Richmond 1999), pp. 200-208.

²⁵⁰ SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, pp. 78-80.

²⁵¹ Ts'ai, *Taiwan in Japan's Empire*, pp. 121-122.

Besides indirect and subtle measures, Gotō and Kodama employed a range of contradictory tactics to achieve their goals spanning from diplomacy and flattery to sheer violence and even treachery. In order to arrest the almost 30 bandit (dōhi) leaders that had a following of 20,000 insurgents in 1898 they appeared ready to pardon them. However, the police's role was intensified and military campaigns in the interior were also employed in the same time.²⁵² The ritsurei no. 24 issued on 17 November 1898 entitled as the "Bandit Punishment Ordinance", aimed at squashing any pocket of resistance in Taiwan targeting not only the rebels but those that gave shelter to them as well. The courts during the Kodama administration were harsher than their predecessors during the tenure of Takano.²⁵³ According to the new law almost all bandits were sentenced to death: "The leaders and instigators are sentenced to death. Those who participate in the decision-making or commanding are sentenced to death...". As a result, in 1899 death sentences regarding cases of banditry increased to 60% and to 74,3% in 1902. Kodama proclaimed magnanimous terms to those guerrillas that were willing to surrender. After the surrender ceremonies that were attended by the Governor-General himself took place and the former bandits were placed under strict police surveillance. On 22 May 1902, the colonial authorities held ceremonies for the surrender of a bandit group at Taichū. After the end of the banquet the doors were closed and all of the unarmed men, 275 in total, were fired upon and massacred. The same tactic was repeated 6 more times in different locations. Gotō's mafia like methods (bloodshed and narcotics) did not provoke a scandal, bring dishonour or effect his resignation. The military approved his tactics while the diet had not any say in the colony.²⁵⁴ In May 1899 for example, a bandit leader called Lin Shao Mao, who had his base in Houbiling in South Taiwan, was promised that if he surrendered his fort he could maintain his troops free and armed. He was also offered 2,000 yen to distribute among his men and land free of tax. This kind of promises was rarely kept by the colonial authorities. In 1902 colonial troops surrounded and killed Lin and his men; 200 people died and Houbiling was raised to the ground.²⁵⁵ 11,950 dōhi were killed in total between 1898 and 1902 (3,279 during the pacification campaigns, 5,673 after they were arrested and the rest 2,999 were sentenced to death according to the Bandit Punishment Law).²⁵⁶

Fukuzawa on the *Jiji Shinpo* editorial of the 22nd of May 1895 appeared to lose patience with the island's obstructive and unruly population: "By all accounts, our goal for managing Taiwan refers only to the land and resources of the island. We

²⁵² The colony's permanent defence force were three mixed brigades, that is 15,000 men, each with infantry, cavalry and artillery. Ōe, "Shokuminchi ryōyū", p. 70.

²⁵³ Following the Yunlin massacres Takano criticized the Japanese military and called for equal treatment for the Taiwanese: "The governance of Taiwan is a difficult enterprise beyond ordinary imagination.... We need to stop viewing the Taiwanese as people of a defeated country or slaves, but as the imperial subjects of the emperor. In other words, they should be treated the same as the people of Japan proper." See Lung-chih, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony*, p. 179.

²⁵⁴ Zagarola, *Taiwan-Formosa*, vol. 2, p. 308.

²⁵⁵ Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History*, p. 35.

²⁵⁶ Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, pp. 185-187.

should resolutely implement all sorts of new policies without considering the native population." On 14 August 1895, he maintained: "In order to pacify the island and develop the rich resources with the hands of our Japanese people, the goal of managing Taiwan should focus solely on the land while ignoring the natives. We should first issue orders to correct all the barbarous customs such as men's wearing pigtaails and women's foot-binding. Opium-smoking should be strictly prohibited as in Japan proper. We should punish without reservation those who break the law. And we should consider those who cannot bear the pains of reform as beyond our civilization. They should be banished". On 31 July 1895, he stated once again: "There are two major purposes for our occupation of Taiwan. The first is to make the island the bastion of our future expansion to China and the South Sea. The other is to develop the rich resources of the island, transplant our manufacturing industries, and monopolize the commercial rights". He continued: "After the banishment of the Qing people in Taiwan, we should encourage the Japanese citizens to migrate to the island and to start industry, trade and commerce. This is the only way to make Taiwan a permanent domain of our empire".²⁵⁷ Government officials too examined the eventuality of removing the non Japanese from Taiwan. The 1896 field report entitled "Actual conditions in Taiwan" to Matsukata asserted: "Possession of the island in question by the Empire being principally necessary in terms of national defense, (we) will either endeavour to expel the native inhabitants and transplant Japanese nationals; or, with development of rich resources as (our) primary (purpose), lull the native inhabitants into peacefulness and utilize their capital (and) labour."²⁵⁸

Starting from 1897, Nogi begun appointing the Taiwanese elite to counselor positions in local governments. The Japanese cooperated with influential and wealthy families like the Lins that owned large estates and private armies and customarily controlled entire communities. Kodama and Gotō further promoted the collaboration with the local elites by approaching the literati. In 1895 the literati of the island numbered 30 to 40,000, 1,5% of the total population. Two methods were employed to impress and appease the local gentry. The first was tours to factories both in the colony and the metropolis to show them the wonders of the Japanese civilization.²⁵⁹ The second was holding feasts in honour of the elderly. Previously, this custom only

²⁵⁷ Lung-chih, *From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony*, pp. 165-168. In other occasions Fukuzawa proposed the expel of "all the unenlightened savages" and the Japanization of the whole of Taiwan by using relentless military force "...to make a clean sweep, to annihilate all evil-doers, eradicating them, and entirely confiscating things like their land, and making an island-wide effort to turn it [Taiwan] into state owned land. See Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, p. 44.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 42-43.

²⁵⁹ In August 1897, 13 Taiwanese were taken in Japan for a tour of its cities, industries, farms and so on. The impressed islanders would return to their villages and narrate the wonders and prosperity of the mother country stimulating respect and awe. See Jordan Sand, "Imperial Tokyo as a Contact Zone: the Metropolitan Tours of Taiwanese Aborigines, 1897-1941 コンタクト・ゾーン(接触地帯)としての帝都東京—台湾原住民の「内地観光, 1897年-1941年」" in *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 12 | Issue 10, (Mar. 2014), p. 1

existed in mainland China but not in Taiwan.²⁶⁰ In March 1900 Kodama instituted and presided over the poetry group called Yōbunkai (Gathering to promote literature) in Taihoku in an effort to win over the literati and obtain their collaboration. Kodama considered them as a means to exert a more positive influence over local communities. The Yōbunkai was a gathering during which the gentry members were indoctrinated into the benefits of Tōkyō's civilized rule. Branches were later established in other cities in Taiwan and the Pescadores. Murakami Yoshio, governor of Taichū after 1897, and Isogai Seizo, Tainan's perfect, invited the local literati to their residences for social meetings. Governor-General Nogi inaugurated in October 1896 the practice of conferring honorary insignia ("gentlemen's medals") to the educated and influential inhabitants. By the end of 1897, 400 medals were granted in Taiwan and the Pescadores. Kodama adopted the conciliatory custom and in addition he regularly organized the "feast of the elders' ceremony" in 1898-1900. The first ceremony of the kind out of a total of four was held in Taihoku on 17 June 1898 in the Governor-General's banquet hall. Kodama personally attended all of them and granted gifts. On his trips in South Taiwan in 1899-1900, he held receptions and established rapport with the educated locals of each area inducing loyalty and trust to his regime. On another occasion on 15 March 1900 Kodama and Gotō invited 151 gentry members in Taihoku to present to them the Japanese modernization programme and gain the guests' support and admiration. They were toured to the capital's facilities (prison, post office, courts and plants) by their hosts during the course of the following days. The Taiwanese appeared impressed by the level of material civilization reached by their rulers. Gotō used to preach the benefits of "new learning", western science and technology over the outmoded Confucian teachings in his meetings with the island's literati. Many applauded the colonial state's modernization efforts and were convinced to send their children to Japanese schools.²⁶¹

The main tool to achieve assimilation was education.²⁶² Many Taiwanese that experienced the Japanese educational system wished to become imperial subjects and tried to behave as Japanese. Tōkyō however, despite the proclamations for equality, never considered them to be Japanese or to possess the rights of Japanese.²⁶³ In 1897, one Japanese principal stated at an entrance ceremony: "Our work on this island represents the first effort in 2500 years to apply Japanese education to foreigners...educators of the world are watching for our success or failure".²⁶⁴ Isawa

²⁶⁰ Matsuzaki, *Institutions by Imposition*, pp. 188.

²⁶¹ Lamley, *The Taiwan Literati*, pp. 329-353, 361-366, 375.

²⁶² Gotō certainly agreed with this affirmation. In a lecture held in 1914 he expressed his preference for the colonial system of indirect rule and exalted the symbolic meaning of modern medicine and the importance of education in the colonies. For him diffusion of the metropolis' language could ensure the creation of law abiding subjects in the periphery. See Shinpei Gotō, *Nihon shokumin seisaku ippan* [The Colonial Policy of Japan], (Tokyo, 1921), pp. 114-116.

²⁶³ Tai Richard King, *The Japanese occupation of Taiwan: An analysis of the Japanese policies "doka" and "kominka" in colonial Taiwan*, Masters Dissertation, California State University (2013), p. 13.

²⁶⁴ Chang, *Marshaling Culture*, p. 59.

Shūji was the first Chief of the Education Bureau²⁶⁵ of the colony with the task of modernizing Taiwan's educational system between 1895 and 1898. Isawa reached the island on 16 June 1895, accompanying the first Governor-General; he submitted his first plan 4 days later.²⁶⁶ Securing interpreters and translators was the first order of business;²⁶⁷ the new colonial administrators and military authorities were unable to understand the local dialects and the island's inhabitants did not speak Japanese.²⁶⁸ Isawa founded the Japanese Language School in Taihoku in May 1896 and 14 elementary schools for the Taiwanese were built throughout the island during his first two years in office. In the next years, 19 more were built with the local districts covering the expenses which were paid by the local villages through taxes. In 1898 these schools were transformed into "public schools".²⁶⁹ Isawa had the long-term goal of free universal elementary education in the colony.²⁷⁰ Taiwanese children of all social classes were welcomed in his system. In October 1895, he declared: "To make the people of Taiwan into Japanese we should not resort to military force. We are educators, and educators must instead expend immense energy and have the utmost dedication to their cause".²⁷¹

Isawa initially established the Shizangan (Zhishanyan) Academy; the first class took place on 26 July 1895. In the inauguration speech Isawa explained to the amassed crowd that the Taiwanese and the Japanese had common cultural heritage; he continued by stressing that after the expulsion of the Qing the new subjects ought loyalty to the Japanese divine dynasty.²⁷² In January 1896, 6 teachers were massacred by the rebels on the site.²⁷³ A Japanese shrine was erected at Shizangan and Shintō ceremonies were conducted annually in the memory of those who had given their

²⁶⁵ The Education Bureau was part of the Civil Affairs Office from 21 May 1895 until 21 April 1896 and was divided in the sections of Compilation and Educational Affairs. The Educational Affairs section was placed under the direct control of the Civil Affairs Office from 1 November 1896 until 19 June 1898. From 30 June 1898 until 10 October 1901 it was made an autonomous office within the Civil Affairs Bureau. From 11 November 1901 until the 24th of October 1909 the Educational Affairs Office was placed under the Bureau of General Affairs. SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Schools Department of Educational Affairs of the Government-General of Formosa, Japan 'A Review of Educational Work in Formosa'", 1916, pp. 15-16.

²⁶⁶ Sondra Wieland Howe, Mei-Ling Lai and Lin-Yu Liou, "Isawa Shūji, nineteenth-century administrator and music educator in Japan and Taiwan" in *Australian Journal of Music Education*, Vol. 2 (2014), p. 101.

²⁶⁷ Komegome, *Shokuminchi teikoku*, p. 43.

²⁶⁸ Zagarola, *Taiwan-Formosa*, vol. 2, p. 267.

²⁶⁹ SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Schools Department of Educational Affairs of the Government-General of Formosa, Japan 'A Review of Educational Work in Formosa'", 1916, pp. 12.

²⁷⁰ Until 1897 the expenses for the operation of the schools were paid by the colonial state much to Isawa's satisfaction. From 1898 local taxpayers assumed this responsibility. See Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan*, p. 42.

²⁷¹ Heaton Jenine, "Early Japanese Education in Taiwan: The Impact of Isawa Shūji's American Experience" in *Sino-Japanese Studies*, Vol. 21, article 3 (2014), p. 52.

²⁷² Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan*, p. 15.

²⁷³ The rebel attack was part of a greater assault against the colonial capital. After they were repelled they took revenge on Japanese civilians at the outskirts of the capital, torturing and mutilating many of them. Lone, *Army, Empire*, p. 44.

lives to education.²⁷⁴ Isawa travelled extensively in Japan to convince teachers to disregard the risks and dedicate themselves to the enlightened cause of educating the Taiwanese.²⁷⁵ Moreover, the Chief of the Education Bureau tried to persuade Taiwanese families to send their daughters to Shizangan and created the first school for aborigines in Hengchun.²⁷⁶ Japanese children had more options: general education (elementary and higher education) and normal school education. Higher general education, the middle schools, and an all-girls high school were later established. In June 1897, the first elementary school for Japanese children was founded in Taihoku. In July 1898, the elementary school organization for the colony was promulgated by an imperial ordinance. As a result, 4 elementary schools were established at Taihoku, Keelung, Shinchiku and Tainan.²⁷⁷

Isawa travelled to Tōkyō in April 1897 to request more funds for his educational projects. The diet gave in to his calls for more common schools on the island. By 1898 Isawa had overseen the building of seventy-six common schools.²⁷⁸ Among them, there were 16 Japanese language schools and 36 branch institutes. The curriculum's aim was to assimilate the ruled into Japanese culture; Japanese language was the main subject, replacing Chinese and Confucian textbooks. Isawa eventually accepted the teaching of Confucian texts to make the schools more appealing to the Taiwanese.²⁷⁹ Military oppression and the lack of Chinese classical education made the Taiwanese parents unwilling to trust their children's education to the new regime.²⁸⁰ Japanese textbooks promoted advancement and individual capabilities but the ones taught to Taiwanese children promoted mostly loyalty, cooperation, and

²⁷⁴ Isawa commented the incident with the following words: "I cannot count how many times I have wiped away my tears, but speaking in terms of the sake of the state, they really did well to die for us". See Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, p. 71

²⁷⁵ SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Schools Department of Educational Affairs of the Government-General of Formosa, Japan 'A Review of Educational Work in Formosa'", 1916, p. 4.

²⁷⁶ Many benevolent Japanese were interested in the colony's "civilizing". In 1897 the Tainan Educational Association was created by those who were interested in educational work with the objective of arousing interest in education. Two years later a similar organization this time at Taichū was formed. The former was dissolved in November 1901 and the latter in March 1902. In March 1901 however, in the capital Taihoku the Language Association was created; two branches were established at Taichū and Ako. It was later called the "Formosan Educational Association" by those Japanese that wished to promote their language to the colony. The Governor-General was the association's president. The rest of the officials were a chairman, a vice chairman, a manager-in-chief, a vice-manager-in-chief and another 8 managers, 30 councilors, 5 compilers and one clerk. Some of their aims were the propagation of the Japanese language, the study of "matters related to Science and the Art of Education", "holding public meetings for popular lectures on education" and "publishing educational periodicals". Every February the first, the association members commemorated the dead of Shizangan. See SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Schools Department of Educational Affairs of the Government-General of Formosa, Japan 'A Review of Educational Work in Formosa'", 1916, pp. 99-100.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 20-24.

²⁷⁸ Jenine, "Early Japanese Education in Taiwan", pp. 58-76.

²⁷⁹ Kleeman, *Under an Imperial Sun*, p. 131.

²⁸⁰ Komagome and Mangan, "Japanese colonial education", p. 314.

morality. They were also taught Japanese history as part of their own history.²⁸¹ Further schooling was not encouraged and was limited to those students that had the potential to be teachers and doctors. Later, Gotō himself instructed the teachers to not over-educate the Taiwanese; further instruction could be expensive but more importantly detrimental to Japan's long-term grip on the island.²⁸² Taiwanese students could study engineering, science, technology, medicine but the subjects of law, politics, and social sciences were forbidden for their allegedly disruptive potential.²⁸³ Carefully selected Taiwanese students were permitted to continue their studies in Japan. The first arrived in Japan in November 1895.²⁸⁴

Right from the beginning, Isawa was in search for the most appropriate educational programme for the colony. In 1895, he visited the Presbyterian missionary Thomas Barclay (1849-1935)²⁸⁵ to study the western methods of educating the Taiwanese.²⁸⁶ Western missionaries were operating schools and hospitals in Taiwan long before the arrival of the Japanese. Many Taiwanese had converted to Christianity but the majority remained faithful to Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism as in mainland China.²⁸⁷ The British Presbyterian mission had been based at Tainan since 1865.²⁸⁸ At around the same time a Catholic mission settled in Daitōtei. In 1872 the Canadian Presbyterian mission opened their headquarters at Tamsui.²⁸⁹ After January 1898 a regulation asserted that any private or religious educational institution in Taiwan could be established or abolished only with the Governor-General's permission.²⁹⁰ No serious clash between Taihoku and the missionaries occurred; many Christian educational facilities continued their operations unhindered

²⁸¹ Chang, *Marshaling Culture*, pp. 60-65. In a 1897 speech Isawa claimed that Taiwan was Japanese territory in ancient times but it had been "taken by the Qing Dynasty". Geographically speaking "...Taiwan really constitutes one chain with our country, and is almost naturally attached to our country". See Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, p. 77.

²⁸² Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan*, p. 23.

²⁸³ Hechter, Matesan and Hale, "Resistance to alien rule", p. 49.

²⁸⁴ Lamley, *The Taiwan Literati*, p. 323.

²⁸⁵ Thomas Barclay described Japan as a "despised empire" for the Taiwanese in one of his numerous writings. In regard to his church's future activities he rather welcomed the change of authority in the island: "In the meantime, there seem to be some advantages to be hoped for. The change will improve the conditions and life for the missionaries, and the greater facilities of communication will greatly help our work. The destruction of the Mandarinate, and perhaps still more of the literacy class as a body, involving the discrediting of Confucianism, will remove many obstacles out of our way". Japanese and missionaries would work together against the common enemy: the adherence to Chinese literary and spiritual tradition. See Komagome, "Colonial Modernity", p. 143.

²⁸⁶ Komagome and Mangan, "Japanese colonial education", p. 315.

²⁸⁷ SOAS PCE-FMC series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, p. 75.

²⁸⁸ By 1903 the British Presbyterian mission had erected 77 places of worship throughout the island. See Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, p. 606.

²⁸⁹ Leonard H. D. Gordon, "Taiwan and the Limits of British Power, 1868" in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1988), pp. 227-228.

²⁹⁰ SOAS PCE-FMC, series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Schools Department of Educational Affairs of the Government-General of Formosa, Japan 'A Review of Educational Work in Formosa'", 1916, p. 77.

since the Japanese favoured modern scientific learning over the outmoded Chinese teachings.²⁹¹

In 1898 Isawa proposed to the Government-General the creation of more Japanese language schools, of elementary schools for Japanese children and of more public schools for the Taiwanese. In that year however, the diet decreased the funds available for Taiwan by four million yen, or almost 30 percent. The civil administrator of Taiwan, Mizuno Jun had decided in 1897 to spend the following fiscal year's budget on military and police buildup. Isawa found these investments counterproductive; for him education was a more efficient instrument than the army.²⁹² In any case Isawa's education-related projects were scarcely funded. He also learned that for the next fiscal year, the colonial government was inclined to increase investments on the colony's schools by only 100,000 yen. Isawa appealed to Governor-General Nogi to gain support for his plans that had been already approved by Tōkyō. When Nogi rejected his appeal Isawa resigned on 29 July 1898.²⁹³ After his resignation Isawa remained in the colony as educational consultant to the Governor-General Government until 1899. In the first year of Kodama's tenure 74 schools were opened with 274 teachers and 7,836 students. In the same time, every village possessed one of the old Chinese schools, with which the government did not interfere.²⁹⁴ In 1899, 1,496 instructors were employed in these traditional schools teaching 27,568 students.²⁹⁵ Future educational programmes were mainly based on Isawa's ideas.²⁹⁶

The proclamations about the civilizing of the Taiwanese through education were shattered under the pressure and the preponderance of the military in the colony. Economy, legislation, and the relations between the colonizers and the subjugated in these first years of Japanese rule were not regulated in line with the patterns of modern civil administration. Every aspect of economic and social life in a military orientated colony was rather dominated by the needs and aspirations of the army. The authoritarian and bellicose character of early Japanese colonialism is easily perceivable through Taihoku's interaction with the island's inhabitants, both Chinese and aborigines. It was in that occasion that the façade of the enlightened, benevolent and sympathetic ruler resonantly collapsed. For the army, administering the colony was a task too important to be entrusted to the diet and the political parties. According to the "Chronicle of the Police Affairs of the Taiwan Governor-General's Office", the

²⁹¹ Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan*, p. 35.

²⁹² Isawa commented: "So far, Taiwan had been conquered with military force. However, it is still a big question whether we can make them obedient from the bottom of their hearts and truly become part of Japan for ten million years". See Kleeman, *Under an Imperial Sun*, p. 131.

²⁹³ Jenine, "Early Japanese Education in Taiwan", pp. 76-77.

²⁹⁴ The preservation of these schools was authorized by Taihoku in 1896. In November 1898, they were put under the authority of the regional administrations and their curricula were gradually Japanized. Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan*, p. 30.

²⁹⁵ Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, p. 604.

²⁹⁶ Howe, Lai and Liou, "Isawa Shūji", p. 104.

office at a certain point suggested the expulsion of the Taiwanese from the strategically important island so that loyal subjects from the Japanese Home Islands could populate the colony making it safer. On 25 May 1898, the parliamentarian Takeuchi Musashi described the colony as “the only territory that Japan gained in exchange for the blood of our forty million people”. In the same session, the goals for Taiwan were set: “simplify the legal system, utilize local customs, save cost, extend benevolence equality, and gradually bring [the people] to civilization”. In many occasions Taiwan was described in the General-Government office records as the “key gate” in the south to point out the island’s importance and purpose for the metropolis.²⁹⁷

The aboriginal problem was synonymous with the exploitation of the island’s camphor supplies, the most profitable of the colony’s products. The first Governor-General, Kabayama, remarked not long after his arrival in Taiwan: “In order to colonize this island, we must first conquer the barbarians”. However, at the time there were more urgent issues to settle.²⁹⁸ The indigenous tribes were called hillsmen (takasago) or barbarians (banjin) by the colonial authorities who saw them as the next savage people to civilize.²⁹⁹ The aboriginal population according to an unofficial estimation was about 14,000 by the end of Qing rule. They were deemed to be of Malay origin and were classified in 9 distinct tribes.³⁰⁰ This classification was based on the field work of the anthropologist Inō Kanori (1867-1925). He visited aboriginal villages in May 1897 studying their customs, culture and social organization. His work entitled *Conditions among Taiwan's Aborigines* published in February 1900 arranged hierarchically the tribes from civilized to savage and renounced the simplistic Chinese classification of “cooked” and “raw” barbarians.³⁰¹ Through his writings he criticized the Qing for neglecting and oppressing the aborigines and presented Japan as benevolent and humane. Japan committed to scientific rule and the civilizing mission paternalistically saved the aborigines, the eternal victims, from the “cunning and crafty Chinese”.³⁰² As reported by official colonial reports “the savages” despite their low level of organization and numbers were occupying 6/10 of the island. The government’s goal was dual: “bringing pressure upon them and that of gradually inducing them to enlightenment”. Additionally: “the northern savages are vindictive and they have the habit of collecting skulls. They stubbornly rejected our kind effort to tame them and attacked us violently.”³⁰³ Those that have submitted can

²⁹⁷ Nomura, “Making the Japanese Empire”, pp. 75-76.

²⁹⁸ Chang, *Victorian Japan*, p. 295.

²⁹⁹ Kleeman, *In Transit*, pp. 172-173.

³⁰⁰ Tai Kokuki, *Nihonjin to Ajia* [The Japanese and Asia], (Tokyo 1973), p. 153.

³⁰¹ Barclay, *Japanese and American Colonial Projects*, p. 199.

³⁰² Kyōko Matsuda, “Inō Kanori’s “history” of Taiwan: colonial ethnology, the civilizing mission and struggles for survival in east Asia” in *History and Anthropology*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 188-191.

³⁰³ The historian Takekoshi Yosaburō while describing the colony’s interior, stated in 1901: “[...] But, at present, it is occupied only by the savages, and only the agricultural resources of the coast plans are exploited. In my opinion, the golden key to the exhaustless wealth of the island will only be obtained by opening up the savage districts”. In 1907 talking about one of the tribes, the Atayal, he claimed:

trade with us and receive medical attention and agricultural implements". Their presence obstructed the camphor production and thus the problem had to be dealt by the police.³⁰⁴

Taiwan during the Qing and colonial era was divided into 3 zones. The Chinese settlements on the west plains, an area between these settlements and the savage border populated by semi acculturated indigenous and the savage territory where the "raw savages" lived. The rich in natural resources territory was however, outside the Qing's civil administration. The frontier zone was gradually decreased because of the Chinese and "cooked" aborigines' infringements aiming to secure employment in the production of tea and camphor. The Qing effort to increase the island's profitability and assimilate the indigenous was directed by a General Bureau of Camphor Affairs and a Bureau of Pacification and Reclamation. In late 19th century increased Chinese military colonization, pacification campaigns, and a system of frontier garrisons to keep "the savages" in check were employed as well.³⁰⁵ On 31 March 1896, the Japanese reinstated the Office of Pacification and Reclamation (Bukunsho) to deal with the aborigines and address the camphor issue. 11 of these offices were established along the old Qing border, 8 of them in the same location as the Chinese stations. Their goal was to open the aboriginal land for economic development, gather intelligence on the savage social and political structures and regulate the relations between the Japanese, the aborigines and the Chinese. In early 1896 Kabayama wrote to Prime Minister Itō requesting 236,871 yen for the project. He backed his idea by claiming that the aborigines' "hearts must be won over first" in order to open the camphor areas for the Japanese immigrants and avoid disputes. In March, his request was granted but a more limited budget was allocated. That meant that the facilities built between the 2nd of June and the 3rd of August 1896 were somewhat understaffed. One interpreter, two clerks, two engineers, and a few policemen (not as many as Kabayama had asked for) manned these stations. The head of the Industrial Development Bureau, Oshikawa Noriyoshi ordered the Bukunsho offices in order to gain their trust to explain to the indigenous that the Japanese would be better rulers than the hated Chinese. He also ordered them to distribute prizes to the loyal villages which facilitated camphor production in their respective areas. The disobedient villages would not be granted gifts or firearms that were so important for the aborigines' subsistence hunting.³⁰⁶ Three months after the creation of the

"They mostly live in mountain recesses, are extremely ferocious and attach great importance to head-hunting. This group is more uncivilized than any of the others". See Simon Scott, "Making Natives: Japanese Colonial Policy and the Creation of Formosan Indigeneity" in *The Japanese Studies Association of Canada Annual Meeting*, Kamloops, British Columbia (October 2006) pp. 3-5.

³⁰⁴ SOAS PCE-FMC, series IV: Formosa Print Periodicals, box 7B, file 4, "Summary of the Administration in Taiwan (Formosa)", Japanese Government, 1909, pp. 18-19.

³⁰⁵ Antonio C. Tavares, "The Japanese Colonial State and the Dissolution of the Late Imperial Frontier Economy in Taiwan, 1886-1909" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 64, Issue 2 (May 2005), pp. 364-366.

³⁰⁶ Goshizan station's head, Yoneyama Toshinobu proposed a system according to which the value of the gifts would be analogous to the villages' actions. For example, the construction of a road to facilitate communication or the promise to refrain from violence would be awarded by rifles and ammunitions. Less crucial activities would be rewarded with gifts like a pig or clothing. Rinkoho area's

Bukonsho offices military police were dispatched to the aborigines' areas since violence against Chinese workers and settlements was on the rise. The camphor's economic significance for the colonial revenue explained the fact that these offices reported back to the Industrial Development Bureau's Chief, who then reported to Mizuno, the Chief of Civil Affairs.³⁰⁷ On 31 October 1895, the colonial authorities proclaimed the "Regulations for the Management of Government Forests and the Camphor Industry" which transformed the island's wastelands and forests into state property if those who owned the land could not prove their ownership. Those lands for which no license could be produced were declared void and their output was confiscated. The colonial state issued permits to sell the land to some chieftains and Han Chinese but by 1900 most of them had lost their rights to produce camphor by selling their rights to Japanese capitalists. After the creation of the Taiwan Camphor Bureau in 1899 and the proclamation of the Camphor Monopoly in the same year the Japanese started replacing the customary system in an effort to rationalize the production.³⁰⁸

The first contact with these tribes occurred during Japan's colonization effort of Taiwan in 1874 as we already examined.³⁰⁹ Let's take a step backwards and see how the Japanese treated the aborigines in the aftermath of the occupation. After 1895 and during the initial years of colonial domination, Tōkyō found itself amidst a guerilla war against the Chinese inhabitants and was still not in a position to exploit economically the island. Thus, the Japanese appeared more tolerant or indifferent towards the indigenous tribes. Indeed, the very first administrators were genuinely well-disposed and fascinated by the mysterious tribes.³¹⁰ In some cases the new colonial authorities collaborated with some aborigine villages in the foothills against the Chinese rebels that sought refuge deep inside the savage lands. The "savage frontier" was terra incognita for almost a decade of Japanese rule. It was only when

Bukonsho chief Saitō Otosaku believed that gifts were a waste of money and alcohol hampered the savages' enlightenment. See Barclay, *Japanese and American Colonial Projects*, pp. 91-92.

³⁰⁷ Barclay, *Japanese and American Colonial Projects*, pp. 82-84.

³⁰⁸ Tavares, "The Japanese Colonial State", pp. 372-373.

³⁰⁹ In the aftermath (1875) of Saigō's expedition the Taiwan Bureau's "Document of the essentials of managing the barbarians" demonstrates how the Japanese perceived the native tribes at the time: "Alas, the Taiwanese barbarians are vicious, violent and cruel. It is indeed appropriate that all the nations of the world have since antiquity considered them a country of cannibals. This is a pitfall of the world; we must get rid of them all". See Kleeman, *Under an Imperial Sun*, p. 19.

³¹⁰ In 1898 some Japanese interested in the life and customs of the exotic savages created the Banjo Kenkyūkai (The Association for Research into Aborigine Conditions). The most prominent members were the anthropologists Torii Ryūzō (1870-1953) and Inō Kanori, who surveyed the savage border. Torii photographed, interviewed, and studied the aborigines on Taiwan's east coast in July 1896. In his writings, he suggested that the Japanese were not a "pure" but a mixed race, contradicting the theory about the unbroken continuity and uniqueness of the Japanese people. Ethnographical research and mapping of the aboriginal lands promoted the subordination of the tribes to Japan by facilitating and justifying colonial rule. Mori Ushinosuke (1877-1926), another famous ethnographer, claimed in 1913 that "If we are to subjugate the aborigines, we must of course first understand them". Barclay, *Japanese and American Colonial Projects*, pp. 191-192 and Tierney, *Tropics of Savagery*, p. 86. For the relation between early Meiji anthropology and colonialism see Akitoshi Shimizu, "Colonialism and the Development of Modern Anthropology in Japan" in *Anthropology and Colonialism in Asia and Oceania*, ed. J. van Bremen and A. Shimizu, (Richmond 1999), pp. 115-171.

the colonial state wished to penetrate the mountainous interior and exploit the profitable camphor trees that interaction with the aborigines was increased. After the consolidation of Japan's power during the Kodama administration and the pacification of the island presumably in 1902, when the resistance was officially proclaimed suppressed, Tōkyō focused its energy to the savage frontier.³¹¹

Mizuno Jun on 31 August 1895 claimed that after centuries of animosity and warfare between the aborigines and the Chinese settlers, the Japanese should adopt a policy of benevolence towards the indigenous so that "submission to our authority will not be a difficult task". He added: "...Like the previous administration [Qing], we should establish a Pacification-Reclamation Office which will gather the heads of the tribes together and other savages and distribute cloth, tools, and hold feasts with drinking. If we add to this earnest and untiring moral instruction, we should be able to produce good relations and can expect to harvest camphor trees in peace, produce camphor, manage the mountain forests, cultivate the savage lands, and build roads [in the savage territory]". The first Governor-General Kabayama and his chief of Civil Affairs Mizuno Jun were veterans of the 1874 expedition.³¹² They were aware of the "savage border" and convinced about the Chinese supposed cruelty, incompetence, corruption and avarice; for them the victimized indigenous had to be protected and brought into civilization. On 25 May 1895 Kabayama made a stop in the Ryūkyūs, on his way to assume Taiwan's administration, where he conferred with local Meiji officials asking advice on how to rule uncivilized peoples. He explained to the heads of the civil and military bureaus his general policy in regard to the savage tribes: He suggested "paternalistic affection" and "kindly justice" for these unfortunates. On 25 August Kabayama concluded: "The savages [seiban] are extremely ignorant and simple, but...once they harbor ill feelings toward a person, it is difficult for them to change course; over 200 hundred years of their enmity with the Chinese and several rebellions is ample proof of this tendency; if we are to cultivate this island, we must first tame the savages. If at this time upon meeting our men, they should think we are like the Chinese, it would certainly result in them becoming a big hindrance to our enterprise; this government must therefore adopt a policy of attraction and leniency...".³¹³ Furthermore, the second Governor-General, Katsura Tarō upon his arrival in 1896, issued some edicts to his subordinates according to which the

³¹¹ Ronald G. Knapp and Laurence M. Hauptman, "'Civilization over Savagery': The Japanese, the Formosan Frontier, and United States Indian Policy, 1895-1915" in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 49, No. 4 (Nov. 1980), p. 649.

³¹² Both of them had orders to investigate conditions in Taiwan in the summer and autumn of 1873. In August, they met people and surveyed the land in preparation for the proposed expedition. Earlier, in May, Mizuno distributed Japanese products to the aborigines and noted their "goodwill". Kabayama had a similarly amicable experience at the Nanwo village in September 1873. Influenced by LeGendre's reports Mizuno and Kabayama came to the conclusion that the savages could be enlightened and that their violent behaviour was due to Chinese brutality and negligence. They returned to the island to tour its southern part in March-April 1874. See Barclay, *Japanese and American Colonial Projects*, pp. 99-111.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 73-65.

aboriginal way of life should not be altered for the time being and they should be treated kindly to inspire respect in return. He noted: “the education of aborigines cannot be neglected even for one day... It goes without saying that it is necessary to cultivate ideas of empire, and at the same time their intelligence should be developed”. In December 1896, the third Governor-General, Nogi Maresuke, during a bureaucratic meeting, claimed the importance of calming the people’s hearts in order to avoid the alienation and resentment of the native population.³¹⁴

Accordingly, the first official contacts with the aborigines embodied this sentiment of leniency and appeasement. On 2 September 1895, Hashiguchi Bunzō, head of the Industrial Development Bureau and Taihoku’s Governor Tanaka set out to meet the indigenous of modern Daikei, southwest of the colonial capital. Their aim was to declare to the aborigines that Japanese rule had now replaced the Qing in Taiwan. Hashiguchi distributed cloth, alcohol and blankets to the first 23 savages they encountered on the 8th of September. They accepted the gifts, expressed their relief for the Qing withdrawal and 4 of them came to Taihoku for a tour of the government facilities. Hashiguchi recounted this episode on 22 October 1895 in his speech to the Tōkyō Geographical Society in his effort to draw the public’s attention to the colony and the “aborigine border”. In mid-September, he ordered sub prefect Kawano Shuichirō to organize the first official Japanese embassy to Yilan aboriginal lands.³¹⁵ Hashiguchi wrote that the aborigines’ hate for the Chinese was so great that were happy to see their houses burned by the Japanese military. Their feelings towards the Japanese however were “extremely good”. Not every initial contact between the tribes and the Japanese were felicitous though. For example, a 14-member mission directed by Chief Fukahori Yasuichiro was slaughtered by natives in January 1897 while inspecting the road connection between Taizhong to Hualian. Upon Tanaka’s and Hashiguchi’s mission reports, submitted on 9 September 1895, Mizuno established the first office to handle aboriginal affairs in Taikōkan (Modern day Dasi District) 16 days later. The station was built near the aboriginal territory and was given an operating budget to strengthen bilateral ties through distributions of food, blankets and alcohol. Hashiguchi appeared also skeptical about the attitude of the Japanese

³¹⁴ Chang, *Marshaling Culture*, pp. 41-42.

³¹⁵ On 16 November 1895 Kawano met the aborigines and distributed gifts to their leaders. A similar mission was led by the colonial bureaucrat Sagara Nagatsuna in February 1896 in Taidong in South Taiwan. With Japanese support, a local aboriginal militia was established to confront the unruly Qing troops still pillaging the area. For the success of these efforts the new rulers relied on the services of translators that spoke the native dialects. The reinstated Qing-era interpreters were upgraded to village officials to facilitate bilateral interaction in a system of indirect rule. In several occasions Japanese married aboriginal women. This practice was deemed as detrimental to the colony’s harmony by the district officer of Sanjiaoyong, Satomi Yoshimasa who complained to the governor of Taihoku in 1899. A *Taiwan minpō* editorial in January 1901 claimed that interethnic relations were the cause of friction and violence in Xincheng, Taidong Province. The colonial state never publicly acknowledged these unions. See Paul D. Barclay, “Cultural Brokerage and Interethnic Marriage in Colonial Taiwan: Japanese Subalterns and Their Aborigine Wives, 1895–1930” in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 64, pp. 337-341.

settlers in the mountainous areas; most of them sought to make as much money as possible in a short period of time and leave. Troublemakers and profit seekers could disrupt the colony's harmony.³¹⁶

Despite the “cordial” bilateral relations Tōkyō put forward more abusive measures. In September 1896, Ordinance no. 30 made entrance to the savage area possible only after the issuing of a permit. The Japanese adopted in 1897 the 18th century Qing *aiyu-sen* or guard line strategy to protect the civilians and camphor workers from indigenous aggression. The guard line was fifty to a hundred feet wide and was created by cutting a path along the crest of mountains. It climbed up and down mountains and dense forest and was constructed around the uncontrolled aboriginal territory. Entrenchments and wooden barriers were erected along the line. Every half mile guard houses were built supplied with firearms, field-guns, grenades, mortars, bamboo drums and later telephones manned by 2-3 policemen.³¹⁷ Every 4 or 5 houses a superintendent station was placed equipped with alarms. In later years the line was reinforced by barbed wire and electric fences. The guard line was placed under the authority of the police and thus the whole system became more efficient and centralized. The line was gradually advancing thus decreasing the savage territory pushing the aborigines further up the mountains or into submission. At times, the colonial authorities could blockade the interior, cut off supplies, such as salt, and starve into submission the troublemaking villages. The fence served to confine the tribes. The artificial border separated the civilized from the barbarians; beyond the border the savages could live as they pleased as long as they remained in barbarian territory. The rest that inhabited the “civilized territory” would be governed under the policy of direct assimilation.³¹⁸ Those that finally submitted were given agricultural implements and land for cultivation. Certain tribes were granted the right to trade but this too was suspended when they became unruly and violent.³¹⁹ The guard line's extension brought about the appropriation of land first in the outskirts of Taihoku and

³¹⁶ Barclay, *Japanese and American Colonial Projects*, pp. 75-81. At some point the Governor-General government enacted legislation to force the Japanese residents to cover their nudity. For Gotō their behaviour was the “biggest cancer of the administration”. See Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation*, p. 79. In the 1896 “Actual conditions in Taiwan report” the majority of the Japanese settlers was deemed as: “a bunch who banded together with government officials, taking bribes and enjoyed undue profit by engaging in construction and building, and selling goods for purchase by government offices by every kind of tricky means”. As for their attitude towards the natives they “bully and intimidate” and “their conduct is akin to that of thieves... insulting the natives with whom they came into contact as much as they please, giving rein to hitting them, and regarding them like animals without the least feeling of friendship.” Japanese dignity in the eyes of the colonized was at stake according to a 1899 edition of Taiwan Kyōkai's bulletin: out of the 1300 Japanese women in Taihoku 800 were prostitutes, geishas and bar girls. In the same year a *Nippon* newspaper edition described Taiwan as a “dumping-ground for people from naichi”. See Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2*, pp. 46-47.

³¹⁷ Ōe, “Shokuminchi ryōyū”, pp. 72-73.

³¹⁸ Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation*, p. 76.

³¹⁹ Semple, “Japanese Colonial Methods”, p. 273.

eventually up to the eastern regions.³²⁰ The owner-less land was automatically seized by the colonial government.³²¹

In March 1898, Japanese workers were murdered by an aboriginal tribe signifying that the policy of appeasement had failed. The politician Mochiji Rokusaburō (1867-1923) criticized the colonial administration's adoption of Qing measures. A more drastic policy had to be put forward. In June 1898, the Offices of Pacification and Reclamation were abolished by the new Governor-General Kodama.³²² In October 1900, Governor-General Kodama made clear that the period of moderation for the aborigines, as Mizuno had envisaged it, was over: "These days the various enterprises in the plains are gradually coming together. As this work advances, we must shift our military forces to the savage territory. But those who live there are stubborn, and live like wild beasts; if we hold feasts for them and adopt a policy of attraction, it will take long months and years for them to reach a certain degree of evolutionary development. Such slow and inconclusive measures should not be the basis for the urgent and pressing business of managing a new colonial possession. We must decisively and quickly eradicate all obstacles in our path". Military campaigns were now organized to subjugate the agitators. In March 1903, Kodama and Gotō arranged a conference with the participation of high officials and Mochiji Rokusaburō, now councilor in the Ministry of Civil Affairs, with the objective of finding a solution to "the Aborigine problem". Mochiji believed that the colony existed not for the welfare of the colonized but for the economic advantage of the homeland. In his paper "A Position Paper on the Problem of Aborigine Administration" he explained that the Shimonoseki treaty gave Japan jurisdiction over the Chinese population of the island; the savages were beyond the reach of Chinese authority and since they were not Beijing's subjects they could not be considered Tōkyō's subjects after 1895 either. Their lawless status meant that they were not protected or included in any protocol and treaty. As animals they did not have any rights. The previous administrators mistakenly tried to negotiate and ally themselves with a lesser race. In Social Darwinist terms, the barbarians had to be assimilated or be exterminated in the "racial struggle for existence."³²³ In April 1898, he exclaimed: "Until we solve this problem with the Aborigines, we will not have sufficient cause to boast to the outside world of our nation's will and ability to expand and be enterprising. The Aborigine territory occupies 56% of the island's surface, and is a storehouse of mineral, forest, and agricultural wealth. Unfortunately, the savage and

³²⁰ The author Robert Tierney described the Japanese system of rule towards the aborigines as "expropriation by dispossession". See Tierney, *Tropics of Savagery*, p. 43.

³²¹ Ching, *Tracing contradictions*, pp. 86-89.

³²² Barclay, *Japanese and American Colonial Projects*, pp. 89-93.

³²³ In the same paper, Mochiji bluntly proposed the annihilation of the savages: "... I refer to the problem of aboriginal lands from the point of view of the empire, there is only aboriginal land but not an aboriginal people. The problem of aboriginal land must be dealt with from an economic perspective and its management is an indispensable part of fiscal policy...It is not a problem than one can hope to resolve by ethical means". Japan had to "to exercise violence in order to put an end to violence" and display its "warrior spirit". See Tierney, *Tropics of Savagery*, pp. 44-45.

cruel Aborigines have thrown up a barrier to this storehouse of natural resources". Mochiji's theories were put later into practice.³²⁴ Similarly, two newspaper articles by the *Taiwan Nichi nichu Shinpō*, established in 1898, proposed cruel measures to deal with the aborigine problem. In the 6th of October 1905 edition, the eradication of the barbarians was suggested but at the same time the unfeasibility of the project was understood since they were hidden high in the mountains. An editorial published either on the 15th or on the 18th of March 1906 described the indigenous as ignorant and violent beasts and thus their breed had to be halted.³²⁵

By mid-1898, the camphor from the Taikōkan area was processed by the Nakamura and Komatsu companies which employed Chinese labour but Japanese techniques and equipment. Nakamura also employed almost 1,000 Japanese immigrants but the aboriginal attacks and mortality rate due to malaria made Japanese work force hard to attract. On 13 September 1896, 23 Chinese labourers were beheaded by local tribes. In the entire island, 79 attacks took place in 1897, 271 in 1898, 293 in 1899 and 314 in 1900 effectively preventing the authorities from exploiting the island's camphor forests.³²⁶ By 1898 the camphor companies and the colonial state started employing Chinese and friendly aborigine guards (1,100 men that year) to keep aggressors away from the production facilities. These forces were responsible in turn for almost 500 indigenous deaths between 1898 and 1901. Paying all these government and private forces signified the importance that the camphor foreign trade held for the ravaged colonial treasury. Camphor export, except for the first year of colonial domination, steadily generated an income rate of 15-25% of the colonial revenue.³²⁷ Nitobe Inazō was interested in the frontier tactics employed by the Americans. They confined the indigenous tribes with the use of guard lines, that were constantly advancing to appropriate Indian land, and they launched punitive expeditions. In January 1900, the First Secretary of the Legation of Japan in Washington requested information on the US Indian policy. In 1906 Oshima Kumaji, Chief of Civil Administration of Taiwan, was sent to the US "to study the systems of government and education of the American Indian.". This kind of enquiries went on until June 1910.³²⁸

The Nanzhuang Incident of July 1902 or Nanshō in Japanese is an example of Tōkyō's newly adopted ruthless tactics. One of the biggest areas of camphor forests

³²⁴ Barclay, *Japanese and American Colonial Projects*, pp. 140-145.

³²⁵ Chang, *Marshaling Culture*, p. 51.

³²⁶ The tribe called Atayal was considered to be the most savage; the majority of the violent episodes occurred in their lands, in eastern Taiwan. In 1903 the Japanese reinforced their guard lines with electric fences to keep the natives away from the camphor workers. The Atayal in response killed several Japanese. In 1906, they beheaded another 36 of them. The tribe was eventually encircled by the army and brought into submission. Years of resistance and defiance towards the outsiders fostered a distinct "Taroko" national identity that persists to this day. In addition, the boundaries and classification drawn by the colonial state created new community identities. See Scott, "Making Natives", pp. 6-9.

³²⁷ Barclay, *Japanese and American Colonial Projects*, p. 132.

³²⁸ Knapp and Hauptman, "Civilization over Savagery", pp. 649-651.

was located in Nanzhuang. By early 1897 two Japanese companies (Fuji shōkai and Kōshō gōshi kaisha), after purchasing the nominal rights, employed more than 200 Japanese workers in the camphor mountains. On 29 January 1898, 6 Japanese and 23 native firms established the Nanzhuang Camphor Association with the goal of improving the quality of the product and eliminating the illegal producers. The Governor-General government started prosecuting the illegal producers, routing the workers and destroying their stoves. In 1900 the tribes living in the hills around Nanzhuang did not receive their mountain fees, payment for the use of their lands that is. This and other transgressions gave rise to a riot. The colonial authorities dispatched a company from the Xinzhu garrison to restore order on 6 July; three days later a second infantry company arrived to disperse the 800 aborigines led by the Hakka Ri Aguai. The rebels attacked and dispersed the labourers working in the camphor industry and destroyed guard stations and camphor facilities in the mountains. The anti-guerilla campaign took the Japanese army two months to complete. To quell the riot the colonial state employed the army, and both the national and local police. Artillery bombing and then infantry charges annihilated the riot hotspots one by one. On 17 November 1902, some 20 tribesmen came down from the mountains to surrender but they were ambushed and gunned down by the Japanese soldiers. It is apparent by the cruelty of the Japanese reaction that the colonial state used the riot as a means to eliminate not only their rights but the producers themselves in order to facilitate the Japanese industrial capitalism's penetration in Taiwan's interior.³²⁹ The previous gradual assimilation tactics seemed unable to yield any positive results. The fifth Governor-General Sakuma Samata (1844-1915) from 1906 to 1915 put in practice a different, less sophisticated policy called "Five year plan to conquer the Northern Tribes". By 1913-1914 he had dispatched 12,000 troops to the mountainous interior to subjugate the natives. The long warfare cost Japanese colonial forces nearly 10,000 lives, while an untold number of aborigine lives were lost through conflict and starvation.³³⁰

³²⁹ Tavares, "The Japanese Colonial State", pp. 361-380.

³³⁰ Knapp and Hauptman, "Civilization over Savagery", pp. 651-652.

12. Japan and the scramble for China

Japan emerged victorious and as a colonial power after the Sino-Japanese war. However, the strategic anxieties about the future of Qing China and concerns over the even more precarious Korean issue were not mollified by the victory. On the domestic front, Itō allied himself with the Liberal party under Itagaki to counter Yamagata's growing influence. This extraordinary manoeuvre did not work in the long run; in August 1896, Itō was dismissed and in September Matsukata took his place. Itō returned to power on 12 January 1898 but on the 30th of June of that year, Ōkuma took over for the next 5 months. His successor, Yamagata held the office from 8 November 1898 until September 1900 when he was succeeded by Itō's 4th administration. As the founder and leader of the Rikken Seiyūkai party, Itō ruled until June 1901, when Katsura Tarō's term started. The political instability of the time was aggravated by disputes over military spending and personal inter-parliamentary rivalries. What initially spurred the deep political crisis and plunged the startled country into an everlasting syndrome of revanchism and distrust towards the West however was the Triple Intervention.¹

The infuriated public opinion, ecstatic up to that point about the Japanese victories on the warfront, criticized Itō's government for the inability to predict that harsh peace terms upon China would mean the intervention of the foreign powers. Despite the latter's frequent offers to mediate and their warnings, Itō and Mutsu did not lower their demands on China. The British were the first to propose a cease fire and a peaceful solution fearing the disruption of their trade in the East. The other powers reacted only after the astonishing realization that Japan would be the definite victor of the war and China was on the verge of collapse. Japan's Foreign Vice Minister, Hayashi Tadasu admitted that while a Western intervention was anticipated, its "extent" was not.²

The Japanese demand for Liaodong's annexation was upheld during an imperial conference in Hiroshima, the war capital on 27 January. On 4 April 1895, Tōkyō began laying the ground work for a favourable diplomatic outcome by communicating its peace terms to London, Washington, Paris, Saint Petersburg but not to Berlin to Aoki's discontent.³ At the beginning of February Kimberley, the

¹ Michael A. Barnhart, *Japan and the world since 1868*, (London 1995), pp. 24-25.

² Itō in a conference in Hiroshima on 27 January 1895 acknowledged that Tōkyō's demands could provoke a reaction on the part of the West. See Urs Matthias Zachmann, "Imperialism in a Nutshell: Conflict and the 'Concert of Powers' in the Tripartite Intervention, 1895", in *Japanstudien*, Vol. 17 (2005), p. 60.

³ Ibid., p. 61. Aoki, Japan's ambassador in Berlin, lamented his government's disregard towards German interests. He was of the opinion that Japan had to approach Germany and form an alliance with Berlin or London against the "invader of the Far East", Russia. See Tajima Nobuo, "Overview (1) Japanese-German Relations in East Asia, 1890–1945" in *Japan and Germany: Two Latecomers on the*

British Foreign Minister, already informed by his Minister to Russia that Saint Petersburg was promoting the idea of active involvement in the Far East, met with the German ambassador Hubert Paul Gustav Graf von Hatzfeldt (1831-1901). The latter did not “oppose the idea of a joint intervention” alongside Britain. The same offer was made to Lobanov, the Russian Foreign Minister, by the German Chargé d’Affaires in Saint Petersburg. At the beginning of March, Berlin instructed its Minister to Tōkyō, von Gutschmid (1843-1905) to appeal to the Meiji government for moderation. At the same time Lobanov revealed to Nishi Tokujirō, the ambassador to Russia, that potential Japanese mainland annexations could cause complications. On 5 April, he declared to the British Minister to Russia that Tōkyō’s control of Shandong or of the Liaodong peninsula would jeopardize independence of Korea and China. On the exact same day however, Katō managed to secure Britain’s neutrality by pointing out to Kimberley the mutual benefits of the commercial clause in the Shimonoseki treaty.⁴

Russian policy was determined in a conference on 11 April 1895. Whereas Lobanov proposed a conciliatory stance after Britain’s refusal to intervene, the hard line advocated by the Finance Minister, Sergei Witte prevailed. Witte was of the opinion that if Russia could not obtain Port Arthur, the gate to Southern Manchuria, no one else should have it.⁵ Japan had to find restitution elsewhere; the Russian Minister to Tōkyō, Khitrovo confessed to Mutsu on 14 February 1895 that Saint Petersburg would not object to Japan’s seizure of Taiwan.⁶ Paris, already allied to Russia to counter the Triple Alliance between Germany, Italy and Austria, followed Saint Petersburg’s course of action as an act of solidarity, according to statement made by the French Foreign Minister, Albert Auguste Gabriel Hanotaux’s (1853-1944) on 10 June 1895 during his parliamentary speech. Since France was lacking substantial interests in the Far East it would very much prefer to remain neutral. After Berlin’s resolute stance and alignment with Saint Petersburg, however, Paris could not afford to stay idle and risk its diplomatic isolation.

Germany retained commercial interests in the Far East and the trade clauses of the Shimonoseki treaty were equally advantageous for both Berlin and London. Additionally, up to that moment Berlin had maintained amicable relations with Tōkyō a fact that explains the German reluctance to intervene during the initial phases of the conflict. Therefore, while the Japanese government might have anticipated a Russian or British reaction, the German manifestation of ill will caught it completely off guard. Political aspirations and irrational concerns were the components that would eventually formulate German actions on the matter. Kaiser Wilhelm’s II obsession

World Stage, 1890-1945, Vol. 1, ed. Kudō Akira, Tajima Nobuo, Erich Pauer, (Folkestone, 2009), pp. 3-4.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 63-64.

⁵ On 17 April 1895, Witte pointed out that until the completion of the Trans-Siberian railway Russia had to oppose any annexations of northern Chinese territory by any power. Russia’s Far East strategy revolved around maintaining temporarily the status quo. See Ibid., p. 74.

⁶ Munemitsu Mutsu, *Kenkenroku: A Diplomatic Record of the Sino-Japanese War, 1894-5*, (Tokyo 1982), p. 227.

with the racist idea of Yellow peril is well documented.⁷ Germany consistently pursued a policy of encouraging Russian and French involvement away from Central Europe. Moreover, as previously noted, the Kaiser and chancellor Hohenlohe in November 1895 were examining the acquisition of Formosa before it was ceded to France as feared. In the same month, the German Minister to China Gustav Adolf Schenck zu Schweinsberg, (1843-1909) proposed to his government to lease a Chinese port in the Pescadores or Kiaochow in Shandong. It is apparent that Berlin was seeking a naval base to compete with the rival powers and expand its political and commercial influence in the East. This could be achieved by an agreement with the victorious Empire of Japan or by collaborating with the disgruntled and ready for action Russia. On 2 April, Aoki suggested to the German Foreign Office that if Japan was allowed to retain Port Arthur, Germany could find itself with a province in South China. The bribe was rebuffed since by that time Wilhelm was confident of gaining his precious base by working together with his civilized western partners and not with the heathen, barbarian and greedy Japanese. On 26 April the Kaiser wrote to the Czar that Germany was to support Russia in exchange for a sea port in China.⁸ Von Brandt, an expert on Far Eastern affairs, had suggested earlier in April that an anti-Japanese intervention would result in the seizure of a naval base all the same and moreover it would have the effect of placating Saint Petersburg in Europe, hopefully alienating it from its French ally.⁹

On the same day that China and Japan signed the peace treaty, Lobanov requested Paris' and Berlin's collaboration in safeguarding "Europe's interests". Later, on 17 April von Gutschmid was instructed by the German Foreign Ministry to deliver a note alongside his French and Russian colleagues. Lobanov on the 19th asked London to join forces with Russia, Germany and France to force Japan into relinquishing Liaodong. Kimberley rejected the proposal revealing London and Tōkyō's closer diplomatic ties.¹⁰ Meanwhile Aoki in Berlin had been deliberately left in the dark. The German authorities would express no malcontent regarding Tōkyō's demands upon China until the 18th of April. On that day however, the secretary of the German Foreign Office communicated, to Aoki's complete surprise, that since Japan had not heeded the previous warnings, it would now to face the consequences of its actions. On 23 April, the three Ministers to Japan visited Hayashi separately to deliver their ultimatum on Liaodong and offer a friendly advice to Japan "to renounce the

⁷Just a few days before the Intervention, his adviser and ex Minister to China and Japan, von Brandt had suggested the establishment of the "United States of Europe" as a counterweight to the Asian menace. See Zachmann, "Imperialism in a Nutshell", pp. 76-77.

⁸Chitoshi Yanaga, *Japan since Perry*, (New York, London, 1949), pp. 252-253.

⁹ Frank W. Iklé, "The Triple Intervention. Japan's Lesson in the Diplomacy of Imperialism" in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 22, No. 1/2 (1967), p. 127.

¹⁰ When Kimberley met Katō Takaaki in London, he stressed that Great Britain had no reason to deprive from Japan the "reasonable fruit of her victories, although they have much preferred no disturbance in status quo". See Aleš Skřivan, Sr. and Aleš Skřivan, Jr., "Great Powers and the Sino-Japanese War 1894–1895" in *Prague Papers on the History of International Relations*, Vol. 2 (2015), p. 41.

definite possession of that peninsula” since “the possession of the Liaodong Peninsula is a threat to the capital of China, that it would render illusory the independence of Korea, and that it would be a perpetual obstacle for pacifying the Far East”.¹¹ Von Gutschmid arrogantly added that Japan should comply since “fighting the Great Powers would be hopeless”. The tactless German diplomat exceeded his mandate by bluntly threatening the astounded Hayashi.¹²

The Meiji government had to counter the foreign threat and the people’s heated reaction. The fear of military action was painfully real. A menacing Russian fleet of 30 vessels that had been assembled in Vladivostok actively operated in Japanese waters during the final stages of the Sino-Japanese war.¹³ A month before the Intervention, Kurino Shin’ichiro (1851-1937), the ambassador to Washington, intercepted and reported to the Foreign Ministry the information that the Russians were gathering 30,000 men in Northern Manchuria, aiming to expel the Japanese from Korea and Liaodong.¹⁴ Moreover, the rumour that Russian forces were ready to embark for the Orient from the Black Sea port of Odessa placed further pressure upon Tōkyō.¹⁵ Mutsu reported that Russian vessels in the Far East were placed on alert and in Vladivostok the governor general of Eastern Siberia had 50,000 men ready to march on a moment’s notice.¹⁶ In view of the grim situation Itō proposed three courses of action to the Imperial Council: reject the “advice” even at the risk of war, call an international conference or submit to the allied demands. The leaders of the military, Yamagata and Saigō Tsugumichi argued that the bulk of the army was still in China, the navy exhausted, the supplies drained and a war against three powers a lost cause. The military capabilities of mainland Japan were scant. The second option was opposed by Mutsu.¹⁷ He would instead attempt unsuccessfully to elicit the diplomatic support of the US, Italy and Britain.¹⁸ As a last desperate resort the retrocession of the peninsula except for Port Arthur was proposed on 30 April but the three Ministers did not give in. On 4 May 1895, the Japanese government announced the acceptance of the joint “friendly advice”. Itō’s government arranged for the emperor to announce the retrocession on 10 May in the hope that the public would not

¹¹ Mutsu, *Kenkenroku*, p. 203.

¹² Zachmann, “Imperialism in a Nutshell”, pp. 65-67.

¹³ Iklé, “The Triple Intervention”, p. 128

¹⁴ Yanaga, *Japan since Perry*, p. 249

¹⁵ The French ambassador to Tōkyō, Harmand fabricated similar stories. See Mutsu, *Kenkenroku*, pp. 211, 243.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 244.

¹⁷ In the event of a conference every power would try to insert its interests complicating the situation. Additionally, a conference could encourage and give valuable time to China to rebuild its forces. Ibid., pp. 250-251.

¹⁸ Kurino from Washington and Katō from London informed Tōkyō that the United States and Great Britain had decided not to intervene in the affair. From Rome Takahira Kogorō reported that the Italian government was well disposed towards Japan and “was contemplating some action”. Italy’s Foreign Minister Blanc revealed to Takahira that on 27 April Rome had rejected Berlin’s invitation for common action. He also appeared eager to mobilize the other powers in stopping the anti-Japanese intervention. See Ibid., pp. 213, 241.

criticize his edict.¹⁹ A new treaty was signed in Beijing on 8 November; as compensation for Liaodong and Port Arthur, Japan obtained another 30 million taels as war reparation. By the end of the year Tōkyō's forces had evacuated the peninsula.²⁰

When the news was made public, the press, amidst an atmosphere of general dissatisfaction, attacked the government for its military vulnerability and its diplomatic unpreparedness. The denial of Japan's legitimate and hard-won gains shocked the nation and led some ultranationalists to ritual suicides and anti-government riots.²¹ The government responded by dispersing the protesting rallies and by censoring the hostile newspapers. Yet it was unable to erase the terrible humiliation. The lesson derived from the Triple Intervention was that formidable armed forces that would ensure Japan's survival and gain the respect of the Great Powers were needed.²² To that end the mobilization of the nation's entire resources was necessary. The notion of using the indemnity and the fiscal budgets for the future military build-up, as the best way to protect the nation's interests, was gradually becoming more popular. Following the popular slogan "endure privation for the sake of revenge", Tōkyō expanded its fleet and its land forces: in March 1896 the army decided to increase its peacetime forces from around 50,000 to 164,000 men and from 200,000 to 545,000 in wartime.²³ On 12 April 1895, Yamagata predicted: "It is certain that the situation in Asia will grow worse in the future [...] and we must make preparations for another war within the next ten years". Only brute military force made sense in a hostile, highly competitive international system.²⁴ Army Minister Katsura fixated on the question of military expenses asserted on 23 June 1898 that if the diet or even the constitution stood in the way of Japan's post war military build-up they had to be suspended.²⁵ After all these painful lessons the Japanese "...do not seem to appreciate the value of diplomacy, except as preliminary to the use of force"

¹⁹ Ian Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy, 1869-1942: Kasumigaseki to Miyakezaka*, (London-Henley-Boston, 1977), p. 41.

²⁰ Skřivan, Jr., "Great Powers and the Sino-Japanese War", p. 41.

²¹ Mutsu, among other, lamented the retrocession of Port Arthur the capture of which cost so "much Japanese blood". He chose to ignore how much more Chinese blood was spilled as a result of the Japanese atrocities. See Mutsu, *Kenkenroku*, p. 252.

²² Iklé, "The Triple Intervention", p. 129.

²³ In 1895, military expenditures weighted down the state budget with 11 million yen. 5 years later this amount had reached to almost 60 million yen. In total, between 1896 and 1905 the navy's total expenses amounted to 213 million and the army's to 101. The government introduced new taxes in March 1896 and December 1898. When these proved insufficient, loans were concluded in London, a step never taken by the previous administrations out of fear of foreign intervention. See Urs Matthias Zachmann, *China and Japan in the Late Meiji Period: China Policy and the Japanese Discourse on National Identity, 1895-1904*, (London-New York 2009), pp. 47-50.

²⁴ Skřivan, Jr., "Great Powers and the Sino-Japanese War", p. 42.

²⁵ Stewart Lone, *Army, Empire and Politics in Meiji Japan*, (New York 2000), p. 61.

as the British diplomat Satow prophetically asserted on 26 March 1898.²⁶ The West had created a monster which without a doubt would turn at some time against it.

If Japan could not at the moment afford the implementation of such a policy against the West, perhaps it could do so against Korea, which certainly appeared as a more feasible objective. Tōkyō enjoyed an exclusive status of predominance there and was witnessing the increase of the Russian influence after the war with preoccupation. Itō and Inoue wanted to proceed with the “egyptianization” of Korea by subtly penetrating its economy and extracting further concessions.²⁷ Yamagata and

²⁶ George Alexander Lensen, *Korea and Manchuria between Russia and Japan, 1895-1904: The observations of Sir Ernest Satow British Plenipotentiary to Japan (1895-1900) and China (1900-1906)*, (Tokyo 1966), p. 29.

²⁷The July 1899 edition of the Tōkyō based journal *Taiyō* read: “the means of extending one’s territory without the usage of troops is... railway policy”. The Japanese interest for the control of Korea’s railways was manifested in the early 1890s by the army, financiers based on the treaty ports, and a few capitalists and Ōsaka merchants. In 1891, the assistant chief of the army’s general staff Kawakami proposed the establishment of a railway line between Seoul and Pusan to facilitate the advance of Japan’s forces in case of a future conflict. With the backing of the Dai-Ichi bank a feasibility study was undertaken by a team of specialists. In August 1894, Ōtori extracted from the Koreans a provisional agreement granting Japan the right to build lines between Inchon, Pusan and Seoul. In November, a group of 100 technicians under Sengoku Mitsugu started planning the routes meant for military use and estimated to cost 2 million yen. The Korean government acknowledging the value of these lines and despite the previous agreements rejected for some time Inoue’s demands during the winter of 1895. Without the capital to build them themselves they preferred that the construction was completed by anyone else but the Japanese. In February 1895, a group of Japanese entrepreneurs decided to establish a new bank in Korea as well as the ventures of building the Seoul-Inchon and the Seoul-Pusan lines. To their disappointment, the rights of the Seoul-Inchon line were granted to an American businessman in April 1896. Shortly after, the French secured, with the mediation of the allied Russians the Seoul-Ŭiju line. Prime Minister Matsukata (after September 1896) was also in favour of securing economic concessions in Korea. The government’s plan was not to contest the Americans and even facilitate them to build the line. After its completion, Tōkyō would purchase the railway’s rights. In May 1899, the line was indeed bought for 1,720,452 yen by the treasury since the capitalists’ contribution was close to minimal. In September 1898, the Korean government entrusted the Seoul-Pusan line to a namesake Japanese company. This notable result was materialized after years of lobbying by the Japanese community in Korea. The settlers not only stressed the “urgent necessity” of the undertaking to Tōkyō but also bribed the Korean Foreign Minister to accept the Japanese offer for the railway line of strategic value and decline the French bid. According to the stipulations of the agreement construction would initiate in 1901 and would be completed within 10 years. After the surveys that took place in February 1899 the outrageous amount of 25 million yen was deemed as necessary for the completion of the project. When the Foreign Ministry appeared reluctant to invest heavily abroad while the internal conditions were far from prosperous the promoters turned to the Army; army Minister Katsura Tarō promised to fund the project from his ministry’s secret service funds. The leading promoter Ōzaki Saburō employed lobbying and political maneuvering for three years until the establishment of the Seoul-Pusan company. To persuade investors he turned to a nationalistic oratory: “It is your duty as a citizen to buy our stock”. Without Japanese control of this line, Korea would fall into the lap of another power, the motherland would be in peril and the lives lost during the war would have been wasted. During the summer of 1893 the line was partially funded by the Ministry of Finance and Transportation but just 70 out of the total 270 miles were created. Thus, the only crucial railway line not in Japanese hands was the one connecting Seoul with Ŭiju. Its rights were finally purchased in 1903 but the construction costs exceeded by far the government’s capabilities. The project was completed on the eve of the Russo-Japanese war for the imminent military operations. Besides the railways, Tōkyō sought to control the maritime lanes as well. Mitsubishi was given funds in October 1876 and in 1881, in order to link Nagasaki with Pusan and Nagasaki with Wōnsan respectively. In 1890, a different company inaugurated the Ōsaka-Pusan line. The establishment of the Dai-Ichi and of 58 bank branches in Korea contributed to the expansion of Japanese trade facilitated by the close

Matsukata wanted the same but looking past the consequences or the powers' conflicting interests. After the Intervention however, Seoul realized that it could turn to the foreign powers to counter the asphyxiating Japanese pressure;²⁸ between 1896 and 1900 the Korean leaders granted to American, German, Russian, British and French investors rights to build factories, railways and mines. In the spring of 1896 the Japanese merchants and settlers residing in the treaty ports protested against the Korean court's decision to grant these constructions rights to foreigners.²⁹

As already seen, amidst the excitement of the upcoming victory some Japanese diet members, prior of the Shimonoseki treaty, set the price of peace extremely high for China. Gotō Shōjirō, in particular, in a lengthy memorandum called for the occupation of Beijing, Korea, Manchuria in the final days of the war. These grandiose plans were cancelled by Tōkyō's capitulation before the allied coalition. In mid-June, 33 patriotic deputies insisted that it was critical to expand military armaments, reform foreign policy and preserve Japanese influence in Seoul. Active involvement in Korea was not to be abandoned despite the complex situation.³⁰ Lieutenant General Miura Gorō's succession of Inoue as Resident Minister in Seoul was a clear indication of Tōkyō's aspiration to brush aside Western influence and to reinstate its exclusive control in the country. In late September 1895, Miura without conferring with the new Foreign Minister Saionji Kinmochi decided to approach the deposed regent (Taewongun). The regent was to take control of the government, continue the war-time reforms, maintain the pro-Japanese members of the administration and restrain the hostile to Tōkyō Min function. For Miura, the ungrateful court with its "arbitrary" stance, constant interference in politics and possible collaboration with Russia or China jeopardized the reforms and Japan's influence. Miura and Okamoto Ryūnosuke (1852-1912), a member of the Japanese legation, devised a plan to remove the Min obstacle on the 3rd of October. 5 days later, on 8 October 1895 Japanese "activists" stormed the palace and knifed Queen Min to death. The corpse was burned and the assailants fled unobstructed. With Japanese troops controlling the court without Tōkyō's knowledge, the regent immediately seized control and installed pro-Japanese agents in the Ministries of Finance, Home and Military Affairs. Shortly after the assassination, Miura evidently content stated that "Well, Korea is finally in Japan's hands. I am relieved".³¹ Tōkyō upon hearing the news reacted not so much out of indignation for its representative's heinous actions but out of fear of the subsequent international outrage and ire of the

proximity of the two counties. See Peter Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895-1910*, (London-Berkeley, 1995), pp. 140-157, 245-255.

²⁸ King Gojong was reliant on foreign diplomacy and aid. He also implemented a programme of self-strengthening to counter the threat against Korea's integrity. On 12 October 1897, he proclaimed the establishment of the Korean Empire and in August 1899 he presented a constitution that elevated him to absolute ruler holding judicial, legislative and executive powers. See *Ibid.*, p. 131.

²⁹ Jun Uchida, *Brokers of Empire: Japanese Settler Colonialism in Korea, 1876-1945*, (London 2011), pp. 52-53.

³⁰ Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 104-107.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

Korean population. Komura Jutarō relieved Miura and Inoue was sent to investigate the incident. In the meantime, the assailants were arrested and tried in Tōkyō but were set free on the grounds of insufficient evidence.³² The coup in contrast to Miura's belief, depleted Japanese influence, plunged Korea into chaos and improved Saint Petersburg's position in the country. Court members and Min sympathizers took shelter in the Russian delegation in Seoul. From there they organized a counter attack against the Japanese-held palace on 28 November and in early February 1896 they occupied government offices, attacked the Japanese garrisons and damaged the Seoul-Pusan telegraph line. Under the pretext of protecting their legation, 150 Russian marines were relocated from Inchon to the capital on 9 February. On the next day King Gojong, fearful of his life after his wife's assassination, took refuge in the Russian legation now guarded by Korean and Russian troops.³³ Later in the day Komura's collaborator, Prime Minister Kim Hong-jip (1842–1896) and his reformist colleagues were beheaded by the enraged mob. Russian predominance was consolidated when the king after consultation with the Russian first consul Karl Ivanovich Waeber (1841-1910) appointed a new government consisting of pro-American but mainly pro-Russian Ministers.³⁴

After the Triple Intervention, Yamagata, who preferred Japan's penetration in the more populous and rich southern China, was one of the few to advocate in favour of a collaboration with Saint Petersburg, which could actually protect Japanese interests in the North. Putting aside the belligerent sentiments and anti-Russian feeling after the Intervention, Komura and Itō cynically sought to bargain with Waeber in early March 1896 by renouncing any demand for exclusive Japanese influence in Korea. The secret memorandum of 1 May acknowledged the political status quo and accepted the King's sojourn in the Russian legation (he remained there until February 1897). Both sides were allowed to maintain four companies of troops in the peninsula granting to Tōkyō at least a sort of military balance. On 17 May, Yamagata travelled to Saint Petersburg to formalize the deal and propose to Lobanov a declaration of a joint Russo-Japanese guarantee of Korean independence. During these talks, the division of Korea at the 38th parallel and the practicability of a bilateral protectorate were secretly discussed. Saint Petersburg confident that sooner or later it would seize Korea's full control rejected these proposals. The final draft of 9 June 1896 provided for Korea's fiscal reorganization and legal reform as well as the creation of modern police and military forces; until that moment came Russian and Japanese troops would be stationed there to guarantee law and order in the country. Tōkyō was allowed to maintain 200 men to guard the telegraphic lines and 800 to protect its nationals in the treaty ports. The Russians had to employ the same amount of troops. Before dispatching additional men, each side had to inform and acquire the consent of the other.³⁵ Nevertheless, when Yamagata was signing the agreement he was unaware

³²Chong-Sik Lee, *The Politics of Korean Nationalism*, (Berkeley-Los Angeles 1963), pp. 44-45.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³⁴Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 117-118.

³⁵ William L. Langer, *La diplomazia dell'imperialismo (1890-1902)*, vol. 1, (Milan, 1942), p. 652

of the conclusion of a Russo-Chinese anti-Japanese alliance a few days earlier. Russian influence was growing at Tōkyō's expense.³⁶ Weaber with promises of loans, telegraphic lines and military instructors secured mining rights in April and in September timbering rights near the Manchurian border.

In September 1897, Weaber's successor Alexey Nikolayevich Shpeyer (1854–1916) persuaded Gojong to dismiss every foreign adviser and tried to take charge of the reform process.³⁷ When in February 1898, Shpeyer requested the lease of a small island (Chollyong-do) off the port of Pusan the Korean Foreign Minister denied. As a result, Shpeyer demanded his dismissal. King Gojong gave in under the pressure of his Russian advisers. In the following weeks, Korean malcontent led to anti-Russian protests in Seoul and on 22 February 1898 a violent incident against a Russian interpreter took place. The Russian first consul demanded the punishment of the assailants in an arrogant and tactless tone. He declared to the new Japanese Minister Katō Masao that the country was hopeless, unfit to rule itself and as such it had to be partitioned between Saint Petersburg and Tōkyō. On 7 March, Shpeyer enquired Gojong if his country wished to continue receiving Russian military and financial assistance. On the next day, under the influence of Katō, the Koreans responded negatively to the ultimatum. As a result, the Russian government relocated Shpeyer to Brazil, withdrew its advisers and closed down the Russo-Korean bank bringing the Japanese back in the game. The failure of Russian policy in Korea made Saint Petersburg more conciliatory towards Japan. Hayashi Tadasu, who had become the Japanese Minister to Russia, informed Foreign Minister Nishi in early January 1898 that the Czar wished to do away with the mutually detrimental friction. Furthermore, he was willing to acknowledge Japan's predominant status in Korea. A month later Hayashi conferred with the Russian Foreign Minister, Mikhail Nikolayevich Muraviev (1845-1900) on the possibility of a joint protectorate over Korea. On 17 March 1898, Muraviev vaguely responded that Saint Petersburg might refrain from interfering in Korea. Two days later Itō's administration suggested the Man-Kankōkan (Manchuria-Korea exchange): freedom of action in Korea for Japan in exchange for its recognition of Russian predominance in Manchuria. The result of these negotiations was the Nishi-Rosen convention on 25 April 1898. Both states recognized the independence of Korea and pledged not to interfere in its domestic affairs. Moreover, each party had to once again notify the other before dispatching instructors and advisers there. Article 3 recognized Japan's sphere of influence over

³⁶ In May 1896, a Korean delegation led by the murdered queen's brother met with Russian officials in Moscow and supposedly requested Saint Petersburg's protection. Furthermore, he made an official inquiry about the prospect of a loan and military assistance. Shortly after, a Russian military mission of 4,000 men was dispatched to train Korea's obsolete army and in the summer a Russian financial expert was sent to Seoul to manage the proceedings of the Russian loan. See Ibid., pp. 650-655.

³⁷ Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 120-122.

Korea since Russia was pledging not to dispute Tōkyō's preponderant economic interests in the peninsula.³⁸

Katō believed that Saint Petersburg abandoned Korea because of the anti-Russian sentiment there, choosing to consolidate its predominance in Manchuria and Liaodong instead. An ice-free port and the trans-Siberian railway were enough to make Russian presence in the Orient felt. Hayashi interpreted the Russian change of heart as an effort to avoid Tōkyō's alienation.³⁹ By March 1899 however, the new Minister to Seoul Alexander Pavlov (1860–1923), unwilling to admit defeat, had requested and obtained the lease of several whaling stations along the Korean coast. During the previous year, Katsura and Prime Minister Ōkuma agreed that the Japanese leasing of land in the strategically located port of Masanp'o had to be done under the disguise of a private undertaking. Ōkuma's fall from power in November and the constant changes of the Foreign Ministers thwarted these plans. On 28 March, Yamagata obtained the cabinet's authorization for a secret 500,000 yen military fund to be used for territorial purchases in Masanp'o and on the island of Koje-do (also known as Koha), the navy's preferable target, pre-empting the Russians. When in spring Pavlov set his sights on the land adjacent to Masanp'o's foreign settlement, Katsura sent money to a Japanese merchant in Pusan, who at first bought off high ranking Korean officials and finally in June purchased the land that Pavlov was eyeing. During the year, Russian warships provocatively kept on docking in the port increasing tensions and the chance of a conflict. In the end, war was averted in the spring of 1900 when the Russian government pledged to take possession of land located only within the foreign settlement's limits whereas Tōkyō would exploit privately-owned land exclusively for the use of the city's Japanese settlement. Both sides renounced their claims on Koje-do proving that at the time no one was willing to risk a full-scale war.⁴⁰

The Great Powers capitalizing on Japan's success started carving up the dying Qing Empire. On 1 June 1895, The Russo-French entente through the Russo-Chinese Bank provided the Chinese with 400 million francs in order to assist the repayment of the first indemnity instalment to Japan. In May 1896 and March 1898, the British Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank and the German Deutsch-Asiatische Bank contributed 16 million pounds each for railway and mining rights which Beijing ceded in exchange. In the meantime, Russian influence was growing. Witte, taking advantage of the loan talks, met with Li and proposed the following: Russia would guarantee Chinese territorial integrity and enter a defensive alliance to safeguard against another act of Japanese aggression in exchange for decreased tariff rates, extraterritoriality, the right to dock at Chinese ports, railway concessions in Manchuria, permission to

³⁸ In 1898 Japan's share of Korea's export and import trade amounted to 79.2 and 57.4% respectively while those of Russia were 1.0 and 0.9%. See C. I. Eugene Kim, *Han-Kyo Kim, Korea and the Politics of Imperialism, 1876-1910*, (Berkeley-Los Angeles 1967), p. 96.

³⁹ Duus, *The Abacus*, pp. 124-126.

⁴⁰ Lone, *Army, Empire*, pp. 68-69.

garrison troops and finally the administration for 15 years of the territories through which the Tran-Siberian would cross. The Li-Lobanov treaty was signed on 3 June 1896 in Moscow.⁴¹ On 27 March 1898, Saint Petersburg obtained the lease of Port Arthur and by a supplementary agreement on 7 May, it gained exclusive commercial rights in Manchuria and the Chihli province (including Beijing). On 6 March 1898, Berlin obtained the highly coveted naval base of the Kiautschou Bay for 99 years; Guangzhouwan in South China was granted to the French with a treaty on 10 April 1898. The crisis reached its peak when London dispatched warships to anchor side by side with the Russian vessels in Port Arthur in January 1898. Britain in the end grabbed Kowloon and Weihaiwei on 1 July 1898, almost a month after the Japanese evacuation of the port (27 May).⁴² The *Jiji shimpō* of the 3rd of December 1897 spread further anxiety to the populace by pointing out that a second Triple Intervention to deprive Japan of Taiwan was underway.⁴³

On 10 January 1898, Emperor Meiji worried about the European ambitions in China convened an assembly of his top statesmen (*genrō*). Itō's administration favoured a more restrained foreign policy based on subtler means, less formal.⁴⁴ Tōkyō traumatized by the Triple Intervention was not materially and psychologically ready to undertake a dynamic line of action. The Prime Minister did not relinquish his non-intervention policy despite the impending danger: "The powers may begin to divide China at any moment now. Under these circumstances, the paramount and imperative goal of our country must pursue is this: to place our own country in the position of unbridled independence, so that we cannot be touched by anyone". To further justify his neutral policy he mentioned Japanese economy's undercapitalization as well as the country's political and social instability. Japan at the moment could not act forcefully, not because of moralistic sentiments of solidarity towards China but because it was lacking the means to do so. For instance, on 9 May 1898 both the Japanese and the British consulate were burned down by Chinese revolutionaries but Tōkyō chose to ignore the transgression.⁴⁵

On 11 June 1898, the Qing emperor Guangxu approved and proclaimed a series of reforms suggested to him by the scholar Kang Youwei (K'ang Yu-wei 1858-1927). Kang in his memoranda was advising the throne to follow Japan's lesson:

⁴¹ Yanaga, *Japan since Perry*, p. 254.

⁴² John Lowe, *The Great Powers, Imperialism, and the German Problem, 1865-1925*, (London-New York, 1994), pp. 114-116. The British had approached Tōkyō before Beijing prior to their occupation of Weihaiwei in a move that revealed their increasing confidence that Japanese collaboration could finally act as a barrier against Russian encroachment. See Barnhart, *Japan and the world*, p. 26.

⁴³ The journalist Kuga Katsunan (Nakata Minoru 1857-1907) ridiculed the people's hysteria and the newspapers that spread false news portraying Japan's transformation from "those who would do the dividing" of China to those about to be carved up. Zachmann, *China and Japan*, pp. 60-61.

⁴⁴ The pro-government newspapers *Chūō shinbun* and *Nichi Nichi shinbun* supported Itō's neutrality downplaying the effects of the crisis and the voices that wanted Japan to remain at Weihaiwei as a response to the "illegal" German occupation of Kiautschou. A more aggressive policy towards the ruthless Germans and Russians and the permanent occupation of the Chinese port were demanded by the Taigaidōshi-kai association and the *Hōshi shinbun* newspaper in April 1898. Ibid., pp. 62-64.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 57-58, 65.

create a parliament, establish a constitutional monarchy and swiftly move towards a modern capitalist economy. During the next 100 days, laws regarding the modernization of national institutions, the establishment of a new educational system and the reorganization of the army among other, brought about a Chinese version of the Meiji Restoration.⁴⁶ Claude Maxwell MacDonald, the British Minister, hailed the reforms but a reorganized, invigorated China was certainly not in the powers' best interests.⁴⁷ Japan despite self-complimenting itself for being the protector and the one modernized and civil country of the orient did not embrace China's enlightening movement. Only Itō, himself harbouring reservations, met with Qing officials, passed along some advice and toured the country in September 1898. On the 20th he met the emperor and Kang in Beijing but to no tangible result. The very next day the reformation effort was capsized by coup d'état launched by the conservative Empress Cixi. Many reformers were executed despite Prime Minister Ōkuma's petition for moderation, Kang fled to Japan and the emperor was forced into exile. On the 30th an anti-foreign riot took place in Beijing which compelled the powers to land some troops. The country once again appeared at the edge of destruction. A relatively weak China was a potentially valuable stooge and in any case more preferable than a China in ruins. Tōkyō, as many Japanese believed, had to manage Chinese reforms, lead the country out of its predicament and even undertake its protection.⁴⁸

Ōkuma's restrained foreign policy much like Itō's was criticized by the press as weak and indecisive. However, he delivered an ambiguous speech to the members of Tōhō Kyōkai (Oriental Association) in late October 1898, which was memorable. Reflecting upon China's degradation he asserted among others that "our empire has the duty to aid and protect China" and "a neighbouring country whose race is close, whose writing is the same...could pretty much make China flourish" and "rescue the Chinese from their present state of wretched misery". Ōkuma closed his speech amidst enthusiastic applause: "...one cannot take away somebody else's country, but if somebody else offers it, in this case—a gift not accepted, on the contrary, brings evil". Contrary to his conviction that China's integrity must be maintained he admitted that Japan as a last resort and "appropriate measure of defense" should take its share of territory like the other powers would.⁴⁹

The post-war period was one of trust and amicable relations between China and Japan. Beijing having second thoughts on its alliance with Russia and feeling threatened after the German usurpation of Shandong was willing to collaborate with Tōkyō. General Kawakami starting from December 1897 initiated a course of military training and cooperation with the Qing army authorities. The Japanese Minister to China Yano Fumio (1850-1931) in the spring of 1898 invited large numbers of

⁴⁶ Peng Tse-zhou, "The Influence of the Meiji Restoration on the 1898 Reform of China" in *OriensExtremus*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (1974), pp. 17-22.

⁴⁷ Kawashima Sin, "Confrontation and Accord: Japan and China pursue different courses" in *Japan-China Joint History Research Report, Modern and Contemporary History*, Vol. 1 (Mar. 2011), p. 44.

⁴⁸ Zachmann, *China and Japan*, pp. 111-115.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 123-125.

Chinese students to study in Japan. Additionally, between 1898 and 1899 the Japanese government invested heavily in the iron mines of Hubei in northern China. The newly found amicability between China and Japan made an alliance appear feasible. When a Qing plenipotentiary arrived from Beijing in May 1899, Yamagata suspected that his objective was an anti-western alliance and thus Tōkyō had to politely reject it.⁵⁰ A tangible result of the Sino-Japanese rapprochement was the non-alienation agreement of the Fukien province, opposite of Taiwan, concluded with the Zongli Yamen on 22 April 1898. It did not secure a privileged position or commercial concessions for Japan; it only reassured Tōkyō that the territory would not be granted by Beijing to another power.

The great chance for Japan to prove its elevated international position and gain the respect of the powers came with the culmination of the anti-foreign feeling in China with the Boxer rebellion and the subsequent allied expedition in Beijing in the summer of 1900. In Japan, the incident is known as the “North China Incident”. Tōkyō chose to side and closely collaborate with the West against Beijing demonstrating restraint, duplicity⁵¹ and the docility required to assuage the Powers. Domestic political instability⁵² and the perception that the rebellion could be quelled by the Qing authorities explain Tōkyō’s initial inertia. On a deeper level this instability and the financial strains caused by the extensive military build-up of the previous years obliged Japan to pursue a status quo policy; it was in Japan’s best interest to avoid the dismemberment of China by the powers at a time when Tōkyō was unable to assert vigorously its claims. Despite the rebels’ attacks mainly on missionaries and Chinese Christians beginning from the summer of 1899, Nishi, now Minister to Beijing, reassured Foreign Minister Aoki (in office from November 1898 to September 1900) on 28 April 1900 that there was no need for action: “This problem is in no way related to our interests and to become involved would only end by damaging Chinese feelings”. By May 1900 the disturbances had reached the outskirts of Beijing and alarmed the small western community in the capital’s foreign legation quarter. For Nishi, the rebels were not anti-Japanese but anti-Christian.⁵³ Accordingly, when the allied powers landed marines to guard their Beijing legations in mid-May the Japanese contingent of 24 soldiers was deemed deliberately small but “sufficient” for Japan’s plenipotentiary. However, the Foreign Minister argued that a

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 60-61.

⁵¹ The deceitful friendship cultivated over the previous years with Qing China served only Japan’s imperialistic plans. Sympathy was extended only when the powers were not watching. It also implied Beijing’s subordination. The slogans highlighting the common cultural bonds and Japan’s intention to “protect China’s integrity” were as dishonest as the catchphrases of the so-called civilizing mission’s. See Ibid., pp. 154-156.

⁵² Yamagata resigned as Prime Minister in late May but was reinstated after months of unfruitful deliberations that failed to find a suitable and broadly accepted replacement. See Lone, *Army, Empire*, pp. 76-77.

⁵³ On 30 May, Terauchi Masatake (1852-1919), Vice Chief of Staff was one of the few in Tōkyō to report the destruction of “railway and telegraphic lines” portraying the real scale of the revolution. Ibid., pp. 76.

more sizeable, numerically equal force was needed in order to defend Japan's standing alongside the allied troops. For the time being though, Itō's advice to Yamagata and Aoki was to refrain from dispatching troops until the powers made such a request. On 8 June, Nishi upon hearing that the Boxers had cut off the road connection between Beijing and Tianjin finally asked for 500 men to be sent to Tianjin. In Beijing, the allied corps under the British colonel MacDonald failed to avert the murders of the secretary of the Japanese legation Akira Sugiyama on 11 June and of the German Minister Clemens August Freiherr von Ketteler (1853-1900) nine days later. On 13 June the Boxers massacred Christians, razed churches and burned the Japanese legation in the capital.⁵⁴

It was only then when the Meiji leaders and prominent political figures, such as Konoe, the chairman of the Pan-Asian political movement Tōa-Dōbunkai, realised the gravity of the situation. While the majority of Yamagata's administration adopted a cautious, wait and see stance, Konoe sensing that the demise of the Qing Dynasty was close reflected on the possibility of a new Chinese reformist regime in the south of the country under the joint protection of Japan, the US and Britain. Others called for the army's forceful intervention to secure Tōkyō's share of the spoils in the impending scramble for China.⁵⁵ Europeans respected power and Tōkyō had to show it even at the expense of its fellow Asians.⁵⁶ Minister Katsura appeared sceptical about the prospect of large-scale land operations. On 12 June, he recommended closer collaboration with the allies, discreet non-committal action and the use of the Navy "wherever possible". Nonetheless, the Minister of the Navy, Yamamoto Gonbee or Gonnohyōe (1852-1933) pointed out that limited risk, in this case the involvement of just the marines, meant limited rewards at the peace table.⁵⁷ Katsura and Yamamoto with the tacit consent of Yamagata agreed to pursue a subtler policy in the North and press for concessions in the South. On 15 June 1900, the government authorized the dispatch of two infantry battalions (3,000 men) to Tianjin under Fukushima Yasumasa (1852-1919), now a Major General. The Army Minister exalted Fukushima's mission: "...Even if your squad is completely destroyed, our nation will be entitled to great rewards in the future". On the 16th Aoki declared servilely to London that: "If the British authorities agree, the Japanese government can immediately dispatch a sizeable rescue force. Should the British government not approve, Japan will hold back".⁵⁸ He presented a memorandum to the representatives of the powers in Tōkyō

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 76-77.

⁵⁵ Even Shūsui Kōtoku, the only active anti-imperialist at the time, asserted in mid-June that Japan "cannot be allowed to lag one step behind the powers". Ibid., p. 78.

⁵⁶ Barnhart, *Japan and the world*, p. 31.

⁵⁷ Yamamoto in a series of books published between 1902 and 1911 advocated the strengthening of the navy as Japan's first line of defense and the expansion into the South Seas. See J. Charles Schencking, "The Imperial Japanese Navy and the Constructed Consciousness of a South Seas Destiny, 1872-1921" in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (Oct., 1999), pp. 782.

⁵⁸ Lone, *Army, Empire*, pp. 78-79.

expressing his government's desire to act in unison with the powers on 23 June 1900. On 6 July, Aoki made the same suggestion to Washington.⁵⁹

Fukushima's force was ordered to set sail on the 18th of June 1900, a day after the capture of the Dagu forts by the allies. On 21 June, the Qing government finally sided with the rebels and declared war on the foreigners pushing London to formally request Japan's participation in the conflict. Aoki prudently conferred with the foreign representatives in Tōkyō and obtained their approval for a large-scale Japanese expedition on the mainland. Japan to reassure the powers' suspicions and make its cooperation count acted only after their desperate call for assistance. On the other hand, to avoid the international indignation in case that its forces appeared in Beijing too late to save the besieged foreigners, Katsura had already assembled in Hiroshima the 5th division since the 26th of June. On 6 July, Yamagata's government responded positively to the British appeals (3 and 5 July) for an extensive military operation,⁶⁰ the 5th division under Lieutenant General Yamaguchi Motoomi increased the number of the Japanese troops in China to nearly 22,000, the largest contingent among the allies.⁶¹ London amidst its commitments in South Africa during the Boer War (1899-1902) dearly desired the substantial presence of a friendly army to act as counterbalance to Russia's ambitions. To sweeten the deal for Tōkyō, London's plenipotentiary promised a financial contribution of one million pounds on 14 July 1900.⁶² The cabinet rejected the offer. Once again Katsura instructed Yamaguchi to refrain from independent action and to keep an eye on the Russians. In fact, Terauchi was dispatched to Tianjin on 13 July 1900 to guarantee the harmonious co-existence between the Russians and the Japanese on the battlefield. Yamagata's approval of the German general Waldersee on 8 August as supreme commander of the allied forces while Japan was deploying the most men and warships proves Tōkyō's unwillingness to displease the West. This decision proved to be unpopular among the Japanese people. On 14 August, the international army entered Beijing, relieving the hard-pressed legations and ending the first phase of the war in success.⁶³

⁵⁹ Paul A. Varg, "The Foreign Policy of Japan and the Boxer Revolt" in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Sep., 1946), p. 280.

⁶⁰ A first appeal for the immediate dispatch of 20 to 30 thousand Japanese troops had been made on 23 June by the British Minister in Japan under the instructions of Salisbury, Prime Minister and head of the Foreign Office. Germany and Russia though refused to grant their consent. See *Ibid.*, pp. 280-281.

⁶¹ Itō, whose opinion as an experienced statesman had particular gravity among his colleagues, expressed his misgivings for such a commitment. Yamagata nevertheless was convinced that close association with the powers would keep Saint Petersburg in check and would avert a second European anti-Japanese intervention. See Barnhart, *Japan and the world*, pp. 30-31.

⁶² In the beginning of August 1900, London's financial offer to Tōkyō was made public by the newspaper *Kokumin Shinbun*. The public was shocked to discover that the Beijing expedition was nothing but an arrangement between mercenary leaders having been previously convinced that Japan was accomplishing a glorious act in the name of humanity in accord with the other great nations. What made an even worse impression was the conviction that Japan's admission to the exclusive club of the civilized nations was granted under the condition that Tōkyō's forces had to operate as proxies of the British crown. Using foreign states as tools for the sake of their own interests in Africa (against Paris) and in Asia (against Saint Petersburg) was a typically British practice. For others, London's invitation for joint action was a token of goodwill and recognition. See Zachmann, *China and Japan*, pp. 144-145

⁶³ Lone, *Army, Empire*, pp. 79-80.

Katsura convinced that "it would be a tragedy to set one foot wrong at the very last moment" ordered the return of the bulk of the Japanese forces in Hiroshima in October.⁶⁴ Japan's two-fold policy of acting in unison with its allies and of preserving the Qing empire's territorial integrity was successful. The Boxer protocol of 7 September 1901 among other provided for reparations of 450 million taels to the allied powers, the apprehension and punishment of the main rioters, temporary control of strategic areas, the right to protect the legations in Beijing and the demolition of the Dagu forts. Komura, the Japanese Foreign Minister after September 1901 signed the protocol on Japan's behalf. During the long treaty negotiations, he sided with the American representative William Woodville Rockhill (1854-1914) to impose less harsh terms on Beijing, such as a reduced indemnity, and to avoid China's partition after the Boxers' defeat. On 22 December 1900, they opposed suggestions to demolish Chinese arsenals and to raise the Chinese tariffs. On 18 September 1900, Japan and the US jointly opposed Berlin's invitation to continue the operations in order to arrest and punish the remaining Boxers in Northern China. Komura played a cautious game avoiding isolated diplomatic actions. Japan would withdraw its forces⁶⁵ and re-establish its diplomatic services in China according to the actions of the other powers.⁶⁶

In general, the foreign press, especially the American, exalted the discipline, valour and bravery of the allied Japanese soldiers in China. However, there were also voices, triggered by the ever present yellow peril perception, and warnings about Japan's actual level of civilization and Tōkyō's megalomaniac aspirations. To silence these fabrications the Japanese Foreign Ministry sponsored a campaign, as it did during the Sino-Japanese war, to shape a more positive image in the West through the power of bribery.⁶⁷ In early July 1900, the Chinese emperor sent telegrams to the allied headquarters pleading for peace. The message conveyed to Aoki on 11 July mentioned the common cultural ties, asked for Tōkyō's mediation and even suggested

⁶⁴ Ian Nish, "Japan's Indecision During the Boxer Disturbances" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (Aug., 1961), p. 450.

⁶⁵ Aoki had communicated to the allied forces that "after suppressing the Boxers and restoring peace in China, all countries should simultaneously withdraw their forces". The Foreign Minister at the time planned to deploy the departing troops in Korea as a response to Russian actions in Manchuria. Katsura decided to retain some forces alongside the powers in Beijing and withdrew the bulk of them. Ian Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: The Diplomacy of Two Island Empires, 1884-1907*, (London, 1985), pp. 16-17.

⁶⁶ Varg, "The Foreign Policy of Japan", pp. 283-285.

⁶⁷ Aoki to "guard against Japan being misunderstood or misrepresented in Europe and America" and to disperse the rumours of an anti-Western Asian alliance sent 10,000 yen along with telegrams reporting pro-Japanese news to the Japanese legation in Berlin in July 1900. The Japanese Minister in Germany, Katsunosuke Inoue (1861-1929) was responsible for their distribution to the rest of Europe. To cover the US market the *New York Herald* was selected; its 9 July edition had to remove an article entitled "yellow peril". In August, the Foreign Minister sent 2,000 yen to influence the French newspapers. This tactic was also employed during the Russo-Japanese war to silence racist anti-Japanese overtones in the foreign press after a cabinet decision in December 1903. See Robert B. Valliant, "The Selling of Japan. Japanese Manipulation of Western Opinion, 1900-1905" in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Winter, 1974), pp. 416-421.

an anti-Western alliance. After the destruction of China, the telegram continued, Japan would surely fall prey to America's and Europe's predatory instincts. Aoki reservedly responded that since Beijing failed to subdue the rebels, Tōkyō's mission was to rescue the foreign residents and not to attack China. Japan projected itself as a modern civilized nation in contrast to the Chinese or even Russian barbarianism. The war reports of the domestic press, under heavy censorship by the army authorities, exalted the heroic deeds and proper conduct of the average Japanese soldier as well as his humane behaviour towards the local populace.⁶⁸

In the meanwhile, Tōkyō, staying true to its limited policy in the North, chose to overlook any pretext that would justify an involvement in Korea. Foreign Minister Aoki instructed the Minister to Seoul, Hayashi Gonsuke (1860-1939) to refrain from any questionable activity on 19 June 1900. Hence, Hayashi rejected King Gojong's proposal of alliance against the Boxers in late June. In mid-July, the US Minister Horace Newton Allen (1858–1932) echoing the alarming rumours that Chinese armed forces were about to cross the Yalu and enter Korea stressed to Hayashi that measures should be taken to protect the foreign residents in Northern Korea. The Japanese diplomat refused to raise the subject with his government and responded to Allen that such a decision had to be taken after consultation with Saint Petersburg. Despite his apparent aloofness Hayashi was indeed alarmed by the distressing Russian military presence in Manchuria in early July 1900,⁶⁹ and he came up with counter measures in case of Korea's partition. While the other powers were distracted in China, Japan and Russia could proceed unhindered to a fait accompli in Korea: the country would be divided or at the very least the port of Inchon could be acquired and turned into a Japanese military base; Yamagata's cabinet prudently rejected the scheme. Hayashi's initiative was picked up on by the Russian Minister to Japan, Alexander Petrovich Izvolsky (1856-1919). Conferring with Itō on 19 July, he proposed Korea's partition. Aoki was not the only one to rebuff the proposal. Gotō Shimpei and the asianist Konoe aspired to Japan's absorption of the entire Korean peninsula. In a meeting on 23 July 1900, they agreed that an aggressive foreign policy coupled with expansion, even at the risk of war, would act as remedies for Japan's injured honour and socioeconomic problems. After presenting his views to Katsura, Gotō returned to

⁶⁸The press also spoke highly of the soon to be allied British, illustrating vividly the two nations' friendly, sportsmanlike competition to distinguish themselves in the battlefield, as it occurred for instance at Taku. The *Dai-Nippon Junmin* journal described how cordially the Japanese were welcomed by the enthusiastic population. On the contrary, the Japanese press portrayed the Germans and the Russians as uncivilized murderous villains or as cowards and lazy at best. The journalist Taoka Reiun (1879-1912) discovered that censorship made his presence in the front futile just two days after his arrival at Tianjin and along with other disillusioned reporters left China. See Zachmann, *China and Japan*, pp.140-143.

⁶⁹On 11 July Russia announced the dispatch of its forces in Manchuria. By mid-July 100,000 troops had overrun Manchuria to protect the lives and property of Russian subjects from the Boxers as well as railway concessions. The campaign cost the Russians some 200 casualties and was completed with the capture of Mukden (now Shenyang) on 18 September 1900. See David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, "Russia's ambivalent response to the Boxers" in *Cahiers du monde russe* [Online], Vol. 41/1 (2000), p. 76.

Taiwan a week later and started planning an offensive in South China.⁷⁰ Konoe overjoyed by the cabinet's decision to reject the division of Korea with Saint Petersburg used his political influence to incite a war with Russia.⁷¹

In the aftermath of the North China Incident, as the Japanese call it, Yamagata stressed in a memorandum that Japan had to contain Russian influence in Korea while asserting its influence in the South, namely in Fukien and Chekiang: "By this means we can in future build up opposite Taiwan special strength which will serve in time of peace as the focus for trade and industry within China. Thus we can hold in our grasp the 'throat of the Far East' and keep in check any intrusion by an enemy".⁷² Fukien was considered by the Meiji leaders strategically and commercially linked with Taiwan as the April 1898 non-alienation pact had shown. Additionally, the city of Amoy, the main port of the province, was believed to be the hideout of anti-Japanese secret societies and Taiwanese dissidents. For the sake of Japan's sole "external" colony Fukien had to be directly or indirectly controlled. On 1 February 1900, Foreign Minister Aoki suggested to Yamagata's cabinet an inquiry to Beijing asking for railway rights in Fukien, Chekiang and Kiangsi. Consequently a treaty similar to the one making railway concessions in Shandong to Germany was presented to the Zongli Yamen on 5 June. Japan, however, was the only power to receive an unfavourable answer by the otherwise subservient and anaemic Qing government after March 1899 when they had rejected Italian demands regarding San Mun.

The stationing of allied troops after the signing of the Boxer protocol in essential locations such as Beijing, Shanghai and Manchuria made China's partition appear imminent. In Japan, patriotic leagues and action groups, tired by the government's overly prudent policy demanded independent and forceful action. Saint Petersburg and London should not be dividing the spoils amongst themselves according to some patriotic journalists. Since the situation in northern China had reached a stalemate, the southern provinces appeared as a feasible and more promising target for Tōkyō's expansionistic designs. Home Minister Saigō Tsugumichi, Navy Minister Yamamoto⁷³ and Katsura, the former governor general of Taiwan supported the project. Katsura in particular aspired to turn Amoy into the centre of Japanese political and economic activity in the southern Chinese provinces. Accordingly, Kodama Gentarō, the colony's 4th Governor-General sought to expand Tōkyō's influence by promoting cultural and commercial enterprises over the Taiwan Strait. For this reason, his civil governor Gotō Shinpei undertook a series of visits to

⁷⁰ Lone, *Army, Empire*, pp. 81-83.

⁷¹ Konoe's followers planned to covertly support the actions of the Boxers in Manchuria to justify an eventual armed intervention in Korea. On 24 September, Konoe to attract public support created the Kokumin Dōmeikai association in his effort to promote political activism. Another asianist, Gen'yōsha's leader, Tōyama Mitsuru visited Itō in his private residence on 17 August to convince him to exert a more aggressive policy in regard to Russia. See Ibid., pp. 82-83.

⁷² Nish, "Japan's Indecision", p. 450.

⁷³ In early 1898 Yamamoto, backed up by Army Minister Katsura suggested to Itō that Japan in exchange for Weihaiwei's surrender to the British had to demand the designation of Fukien as Tōkyō's exclusive sphere of influence. See Duus, *The Abacus*, p. 170.

Chinese officials and Japanese merchants at Amoy. In the summer 1900 during the Boxer rebellion Sun Yat-sen, the famous Chinese revolutionary leader with ties to Tōkyō, hatched a plan with Kodama to utilize Taiwan as a base for Sun's projects in South China. Supporting Sun would yield territorial rewards for Japan in case of success and Kodama ordered Gotō to help the rebels capture the city of Waichow (Huìzhōu) east of Canton. Sun's field commander Cheng Shih-liang had assembled 600 men in Guangdong for this purpose in August 1900. This unit clashed with the Qing forces sent against them in September. Beijing's troops were defeated; many joined Cheng's army and large amounts of weapons fell in rebel hands during the following two weeks. Sun from Taiwan ordered Cheng to march towards Amoy where Japanese supplies and munitions would be available. The Chinese revolutionary even appointed a local provisional government, which included many Japanese. Fresh Qing reinforcements however caught up and crushed his forces on their way to Amoy. Sun, unable to offer any kind of tangible help, sent Yamada Yoshimasa to disband the rebels.⁷⁴ The future president of the Republic of China attributed the failure of his movement to the change of the political scenery that had taken place in Tōkyō, with Yamagata's cabinet stepping down in September 1900.⁷⁵

On 10 August 1900, Tōkyō decided to act. Katsura instructed Kodama to prepare an expeditionary force to land and take control of Amoy. By 13 August, Vice Navy Minister Saitō Makoto (1858-1936) laid out the plan: the city would be captured by 300 marines from two or three patrolling warships. On the 14th the day that the Beijing legations were rescued, the commander of the Japanese navy in the area was authorized by Yamamoto to land marines ashore in case the Japanese residents were in peril. The Navy Minister's actual words were: "...Also should unrest appear in the Amoy region, or some other opportunity arise, work with our consul and, on the pretext of defending local Japanese residents, land a number of marines". Kodama complained to Katsura about the small number (300) of the marines that could be deployed at Amoy. To confront the 2,000 Chinese, reinforcements from Taiwan would be needed. The colony's governor general impatiently urged Terauchi, the Vice Chief of Staff on the 17th to act: "We should occupy Amoy at least and without delay. Since we need a pretext it is no good to leave things to our consul".⁷⁶ On 23 August Kodama finally received the government's authorization to dispatch one infantry battalion, two artillery batteries and one company of engineers (a total of around 1,000 men) providing that the naval commander deemed it necessary. Tōkyō gave to the navy the upper hand in a relatively small-scale operation.

⁷⁴ Sun delivered Yamada's eulogy after his death at the hand of the Chinese forces. He said that: "he came forward and went to his death in battle for the cause of righteousness. Truly he sacrificed himself for humanity and became pioneer of the New Asia". See Marius Jansen, "Japan and the Chinese Revolution of 1911" in *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 11: Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911, Part 2*, ed. J. K. Fairbank, Kwang-Ching Liu, (Cambridge, London 1980), p. 369.

⁷⁵ Marius B. Jensen, "Opportunists in South China during the Boxer Rebellion" in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Aug., 1951), pp. 243-245.

⁷⁶ Lone, *Army, Empire*, p. 85.

The pretext for an intervention was soon found. On the evening of 24 August, a Japanese Buddhist temple in Amoy caught on fire under suspicious circumstances.⁷⁷ The head priest, a man named Takamatsu, fled to the consulate and reported that the shrine was burned by the Chinese mob. The Qing authorities and some foreign diplomats implied that the fire was set by Takamatsu himself.⁷⁸ On the same day, at the request of the Japanese consul at Amoy, Ueno Sen'ichi a small number of marines landed to protect Japanese nationals, the consulate and the East Asia Academy, a Japanese educational institution. A second group followed on 25 August but Gotō, who was in Amoy at the time, noticed that these forces were inadequate and shared his concern with the naval commander. The latter after conferring with Ueno asked for Kodama's reinforcements on the 27th of August. The following day two infantry companies left Taiwan for the mainland. Kodama wished to send further companies as the chances of an anti-Japanese incident were increasing with the number of Japanese troops pouring into Amoy. The invasion was set for the 29th of August.⁷⁹ Gotō's occupation plans were interrupted by the arrival of new orders from the Foreign Minister Aoki to Ueno on the same day: the marines had to withdraw to the consulate and the approaching vessels had to return to Taiwan as soon as possible. As Katsura had explained to Kodama the day before, to his frustration, the government decided to postpone and eventually call off Amoy's occupation; by 7 September the Japanese troops had evacuated the city. During the previous days American, Russian, French and British ships gathered at the port and some of them landed small forces on 5 September. The allied powers had the right to act in concert at treaty ports such as Amoy in cases of emergency. Still, Gotō on 30 August wrote to Aoki requesting the completion of the expedition.⁸⁰ The Foreign Minister instead clarified to the western representatives in Tōkyō that the landings took place to protect foreign nationals and that the troops would be withdrawn once order was restored. Ueno's response was

⁷⁷A few days earlier on 10 August, Aoki had asked Kodama: "Is there any means to bring about a favorable anti-foreign disturbance in Amoy or Fuzhou"? See *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁷⁸The American vice-consul Johnson investigated the incident and reported that the "temple" was an abandoned house rented by three Japanese priests who had removed everything of value just before the "arson". On 18 August, the colonial government of Taiwan had "donated" 600 yen to the temple's curators. Jensen, "Opportunists in South China", p. 246.

⁷⁹An ultimatum was presented to the Chinese authorities to demolish the city's forts. On 28 August 1900, the Japanese justified to the British government their actions at Amoy by claiming that the city had "frequently been the basis of secret and dangerous attempts against the security" of Taiwan. See Lone, *Army, Empire*, p. 86.

⁸⁰On the very next day, Gotō was recalled to Taiwan and from there he immediately departed for Japan. In Tōkyō, he was briefed on the situation in the cabinet by Saigō Tsugumichi, who was in favour of Kodama's plan. In Gotō's telegrams to governor general Kodama in September 1900 it is conveyed that the blame for the mission's abandonment should be placed on Itō's fear of foreign reaction: "From the start the cabinet's views on Amoy were uncertain. Each Minister seems to have compromised his responsibilities and, when on August 26 [sic] Russia proposed the withdrawal of her troops from Peking, the cabinet received quite a shock and took the cowardly course. Moved by Ito's weak policy, they hoped, it appears, to rectify matters by passing the temporary responsibility to Consul Ueno [at Amoy]". He added: "The reason for the cancellation of the Amoy incident is becoming clear. There were no diplomatic protests to interfere; in the final analysis, it was a failure caused by excessive fear. It is endlessly humiliating". See Nish, "Japan's Indecision", pp. 453-454.

similar when the western consuls asked him to order the withdrawal of the Japanese troops in Amoy. He refused on the grounds that the situation was still perilous and that anti-Japanese insurgents in the city were plotting against Tōkyō's rule over Taiwan. In late August, the consuls pleaded directly to the Japanese government, causing great alarm and bringing back memories of the Triple Intervention. Itō, soon to be premier but at the time a mere adviser to the Foreign Ministry, urged Aoki and Yamagata to evacuate Amoy and refrain from an occupation that would dissatisfy primarily the British government. Prime Minister Yamagata's cabinet complied since it had only authorized the navy's action and not a full-scale invasion and occupation as envisioned by the Taiwanese duo. The prospect of the powers' slightest discontent was enough to bring the Amoy incident to an inglorious end. On 29 August, navy Minister Yamamoto accused Katsura that is the army, for interfering in the naval operations at Amoy.⁸¹ Yamagata and Aoki took Yamamoto's side. Taiwan's governor general asked to be transferred in protest; after his demand was rejected he requested Tōkyō's permission to resign due to his supposedly deteriorating health. Emperor Meiji sent a special emissary, Komeda to persuade Kodama to remain at his post. Komeda succeeded in his mission by reassuring Kodama that the throne still considered Taiwan as an important asset for the empire. After the fiasco and the accusations launched by the press, Yamagata's cabinet announced its resignation to the emperor on 11 September 1900.⁸² Japan, amidst political instability and indecision, had proved incapable to impose its claims across the Taiwan Strait or to even aid Sun's revolutionaries and obtain a sphere of influence in the South.

By the end of the Boxer rebellion, Russia had 50,000 men in Manchuria and was in control of the port of Niuchuang and of the Tianjin-Beijing railway line. Yamagata's successor in October 1900, Itō was willing to negotiate with the Russians on the base of an exchange involving Korea and Manchuria.⁸³ On 22 July 1900, Komura, at the time Japan's plenipotentiary in Saint Petersburg, urged the imperial government to proceed with the Russians to the delimitation of their respective spheres of influence. Four days later Aoki and Komura prepared a draft that was to be presented to the new Russian Foreign Minister Vladimir Nikolayevich Lamsdorf (1845-1907). On 15 August Komura informed his government that Lamsdorf had rejected the proposed Manchuria-Korea exchange and suggested the observance of the Nishi-Rosen convention. In early August, Witte, Saint Petersburg's Far East expert, professed that Russia was unwilling to renounce its claims in Korea to obtain a free hand in Manchuria. Tōkyō's efforts to achieve a diplomatic reconciliation eventually wore off. Nonetheless, Foreign Minister Aoki instructed Inoue on 27 August 1900,

⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 453-455.

⁸² Jensen, "Opportunists in South China", p. 248.

⁸³ As Itō commented on 10 September 1900, Japan's entrenchment in Korea could prevent further Russian expansion. According to his statements made on 20 August 1900, Yamagata too believed that Russian occupation of Manchuria could mean advantages in Korea for Japan. An agreement of this kind implied the end of political friction with Saint Petersburg. For Yamagata, Tōkyō's seizure of Korea would be accepted by the US and Britain and would be opposed by Russia, French and Germany. See Nish, "Japan's Indecision", pp. 457-459.

now Minister to Berlin, to enquire the German government if it had any objections to Japan's placing Korea under its sphere of influence. Aoki was convinced that Germany along Russia harboured territorial designs on China having witnessed the dispatch of additional German forces after the Beijing legations had been relieved. To drive a wedge between Berlin and its supposed ally Aoki was willing to "guarantee neutrality if German plans in China encountered opposition from any power, provided Germany undertook not to support Russia in any opposition which she had to Japan's activities in Korea". Count Leyden, the German chargé d'affaires in Tōkyō assured the Japanese government that Germany had no objections regarding Korea or agreements with Russia.⁸⁴ Japan had revealed its plans in Asia but gained Germany's promise that a second Triple Intervention was not to be repeated.⁸⁵

On 19 October, the adamant anti-Russianist, Katō Takaaki took over the Foreign Ministry during Itō's fourth and last administration. Besides Korea, Katō was coveting Manchuria; Japan had to act before the construction of the Trans-Siberian railway and possibly in cooperation with London to halt the Russian halt Russian expansion. Their troops had not evacuated the Chinese territory as decreed by the Boxer protocol despite Saint Petersburg's pledge to withdraw its forces from Manchuria gradually. On 22 November 1900, a treaty between Russia and China was agreed that if ratified, would transform northern China into a Saint Petersburg protectorate. The draft was the brainchild of the Russian Minister of War Alexei Nikolayevich Kuropatkin (1848-1925) and provided for exclusive Russian interests, ignoring the principle of the "Open Door" to a huge area extending from Mongolia to Yalu River in Korea.⁸⁶ In the spring of 1901 Katō lodged official complaints against Saint Petersburg's actions in Manchuria and he approached London and Berlin for support.⁸⁷ He even warned Beijing that a close association with Russia could bring

⁸⁴ On 15 September, he declared that Germany's "interest in Corea [sic] being only commercial, she has no intention to interfere in any way [in any] complication between Japan and any other power regarding that peninsula, and has no intention to take sides with either of them; Germany will observe absolute neutrality; Germany not only wishes to stand aloof from all complications arising out of [the] Korean [sic] question, but desires to secure harmony and concert with all Powers". See Ibid., p. 459.

⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 458-461.

⁸⁶ The French chargé d'affaires in Beijing, Baron d'Anthouard described allied Russia's policy in Manchuria as "a sort of unofficial protectorate" on 11 November. For the provisions of the Manchurian Convention see Lensen, *Korea and Manchuria*, pp. 127-138.

⁸⁷ On 25 October 1900, the two powers had pledged to maintain the "Open Door" policy "for all Chinese territory as far as they can exercise influence". Katō sought to gain support for a similar international agreement signed by every power but to no avail. Berlin was unwilling to sever its relations with Russia over China. To Katō's disappointment chancellor Bülow stated on 15 March 1901 in the Reichstag that Manchuria "was a matter of absolute indifference to German". The German diplomat Von Eckardstein proposed to Hayashi Tadasu a British-German-Japanese alliance for the protection of equal opportunities and China's integrity on 18 March 1901 but the idea was not adopted by the German government. On the other hand, London was committed to the "Open Door" doctrine alongside Washington with the 6th of September 1899 agreement. According to the Russo-British treaty of the 28th of April 1899, Saint Petersburg promised not to interfere in the British sphere of influence in the Yangtze valley and London on its part to abstain from claiming railway concessions north of the Great Wall. See Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, pp. 126-127.

upon dire consequences and on 5 February he asked London's cooperation.⁸⁸ At the very least Japan had to be compensated with another chunk of Chinese territory.⁸⁹ On 5 April the meeting of generals and admirals presided by Yamagata, Ōyama and the Navy Minister Saigō Tsugumichi examined intelligence reports on the Russian forces in Manchuria. Despite Saigō's hesitation, preparations were set in motion for emergency measures.⁹⁰ A bellicose tone was evident in the diet and in the press. As part of a well defined anti-Russian policy Hayashi Tadasu, Minister to London after March 1900, proposed to the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lansdowne (1845-1927) a treaty to safeguard their respective spheres of influence on 7 April. In May, the attempt to lure Berlin in the Far East agreement failed but the British-Japanese negotiations were well underway. Izvolsky and Foreign Minister Lamsdorf realized that the Japanese meant businesses; an official declaration on 5 April 1901 announced that Russia was abandoning Kuropatkin's project.⁹¹ Japan's diplomatic victory washed away some of the shame of the Triple Intervention. After the crisis Yamagata was convinced that the best way to counter the Russian pressure was through a powerful alliance. In a late April letter to Itō the experienced statesman presented his idea for an alliance with London and Berlin to prevent a third power from intervening in a Russo-Japanese war that was sure to come.⁹²

On 17 July 1901, Hayashi was ordered by the new Katsura administration to negotiate an understanding with London. Britain was already contesting Russian expansionism in Asia. Besides, for the officers of the Imperial Navy their counterparts of the Royal Navy were their "honoured former teacher".⁹³ In September 1900 Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914) pointed out the main pillars of Britain's policy in China: cordial relations with Japan and the breaching of the Russo-German ties.⁹⁴ Unofficial talks between Hayashi and MacDonald, Consul-General to Japan after October 1900, started on 31 July in London but were made out of courtesy and were nothing more than a mere exchange of views. Itō's term was to end abruptly

⁸⁸ 10 days later Katō organized a similar attempt to pressurize Beijing into giving up its close association with the Russians. The German Foreign Minister Oswald Freiherr von Richthofen (1847–1906) appeared unmoved even on 1 March when Beijing requested the powers' mediation to deal with the Russian demands. Despite Hayashi's attempts and London's efforts it was evident that at the time Berlin was prepared to offer just its neutrality. In mid-March 1901, Hayashi was told that with Germany neutral he could not expect active British assistance against Russia. See G. W. Monger, "The End of Isolation: Britain, Germany and Japan, 1900-1902: The Alexander Prize Essay" in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Fifth Series*, Vol. 13 (1963), pp. 111-112.

⁸⁹ Barnhart, *Japan and the world*, p. 33.

⁹⁰ Precautionary measures did not mean that Japan was actually prepared to engage in war. For some historians Japan was actually bluffing by maintaining a hard-line against Saint Petersburg. Tōkyō was scarcely ready both financially and militarily for such an eventuality. In April 1901, the Russians had more battleships and cruisers in the Far East than the Japanese. See Richard Storry, *The Making of the Twentieth Century: Japan and the Decline of the West in Asia, 1894-1943*, (London 1979), pp. 41-42.

⁹¹ Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, pp. 119-131.

⁹² Storry, *The Making of the Twentieth Century*, p. 43.

⁹³ Barnhart, *Japan and the world*, p. 34.

⁹⁴ Monger, "The End of Isolation", p. 107.

partly because of financial problems. On 16 July, the German diplomat von Eckardstein mentioned to Lansdowne that the Japanese were negotiating in Paris a loan that would act as a channel of rapprochement between Tōkyō and Saint Petersburg.⁹⁵ Lansdowne alarmed by these reports told Hayashi on the 31st of July that a bilateral understanding had to be achieved to guarantee the status quo against a Russian encroachment in the East. Yamagata's protégé Katsura was convinced that the goals of his foreign policy, the establishment of a protectorate over Korea and Russia's containment could only be achieved by a considerable naval expansion and through an alliance with a Great Power. He and Yamagata were favouring an alliance with Britain whereas Itō backed up by Inoue believed that a compromise with Russia was still feasible. Itō believed that "Britain's national strength was failing". He wished to meet with the Czar's officials and bargain on a Manchuria for Korea basis and follow up on Witte's declaration in the summer of 1901 according to which such an agreement would be acceptable. Witte further promised to convince French creditors to finance a loan for Japan. On 11 September, Katsura approved Itō's visit, since just the speculation of a Russo-Japanese arrangement could motivate an advantageous British counteraction.⁹⁶ Indeed, a first British draft of alliance was presented to Hayashi on the 6th of November. Itō during his visit in Saint Petersburg in late November 1901 exchanged views and proposals with Lamsdorf but to no avail. The inconclusiveness of these talks and the joint decision by the Emperor's elder statesmen, Cabinet and Army to conclude an alliance with London sealed the deal. Katsura's Foreign Minister, Komura contrary to Itō's views exclaimed in December 1901 that "if Manchuria becomes the property of Russia, Korea itself cannot remain independent". For Komura, a settlement with Russia could not last in time whereas an alliance with London would enhance Tōkyō's position in Korea. Amidst the Boer War and facing its own financial problems, Salisbury's cabinet sought an alliance which would relieve the Royal Navy of its obligations in the Far East.⁹⁷

The Anglo-Japanese alliance's practical aim was the accomplishment of naval superiority over France and Russia in the Far East. It was signed on 30 January 1902 in London by Hayashi and Lansdowne. The first article recognized both countries' interests in China but Tōkyō's preeminence in Korea "in a peculiar degree politically as well as commercially and industrially". The allies agreed to intervene (not jointly in Korea's case) in the event of these interests being jeopardized by domestic disturbances or external danger. Article 2 declared the other party's benevolent neutrality in case its ally became involved in a war. According to the third article, on the condition that the warring party confronted more than one opponents the other had to initiate hostilities and "conduct the war in common". The pact was valid for 5 years covering geographically only the Far East despite London's attempt to insert a clause

⁹⁵ This rumour was a byproduct of Finance Minister Watanabe Kunitake's (1846-1919) visit to Europe in July. See Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, p. 150.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 147, 167-174.

⁹⁷ An alliance not only could enable London to reduce its naval strength in China but also to use Japanese dockyards and thus save money. See Storry, *The Making of the Twentieth Century*, p. 46.

for the protection of its interests in South East Asia and India. London was obliged to maintain considerable naval forces in East Asian waters and support Tōkyō's actions in Korea. Many in Britain criticized harshly the provisions of an alliance which in any case pulled London out of its isolation.⁹⁸ Japan had gained an ally against its mortal enemy; it had diplomatically outwitted the most experienced player in the game.

Within 35 years of the Meiji Restoration Japan had managed, by employing just and unjust means like every other power, to annul the humiliating unequal treaties, defeat the greatest Asian empire, obtain a colony and a strong position in Korea and ally itself with the most prestigious of the Western powers. It had not only survived the distressing colonial outbreak of the late 19th century but it had secured a respectable place among the powers of the 20th century. Brushing aside, up to a point, the persistent racist prejudices of the West, Japan was finally awarded the right to survive and have a future. Victory over Russia⁹⁹ in 1905 invested Japan with glory and spread hope, inspiration and self-respect to the other nations that could not escape the imperialistic grip.

⁹⁸ Monger, "The End of Isolation", p. 120

⁹⁹ The Russian-Chinese convention of 8 April 1902 provided for Manchuria's gradual evacuation of Russian forces except for Port Arthur and the garrisons that protected the Russian railways. Precisely a year later the second evacuation stage had virtually come to a halt deteriorating the already stressed Russo-Japanese relations. The Anglo-Japanese alliance gave Japan confidence in its negotiations but was a source of frustration for the Russians. In August 1903 Japan's proposal fluctuated from the solution of Man-Kankōkan to a joint declaration of Korea's and China's territorial integrity. After demanding an exclusive, preferential status in regard to Korea, Tōkyō consequently suggested that if it found itself obliged to send troops there, Saint Petersburg could also dispatch forces to Manchuria; however, these should "not exceed the number actually required". Russia submitted a set of counterproposals two months later (5 October 1903) that included the demilitarization of Korea. Komura believed that Saint Petersburg's proposals were a mere stratagem to gain time and tighten its grip on Manchuria. In any case Korea's neutralization would annul Japan's dominant position there. Korea's demilitarization would be proposed by the Russians on three separate occasions without success. On 12 August 1903, the viceroyalty of the Far East was established at Port Arthur and in October the city of Mukden was reoccupied instead of evacuated, signaling Russia's will to consolidate its position in Manchuria. On 30 October 1903, Tōkyō appeared willing to recognize Russia's special interests but both parties were getting ready for the worst-case scenario. The negotiations were broken off on 4 February 1904, before the completion of the Trans-Siberian railway, and 4 days later the Russo-Japanese war erupted. Tōkyō rejected Beijing's offer of military assistance as its aim was to capture the Russian possessions in Manchuria and avoid another outburst of the Yellow peril syndrome. See Storry, *The Making of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 53-63 and Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy*, pp. 69-71.

13. Conclusions

The need to solidify the achievements of the Italian Unification (1830-1870), consolidate its authority on the whole of the peninsula and deal with financial difficulties meant that the Italian government had to set as priority and dedicate itself entirely on the time-consuming process of restructuring and stabilizing the state. The lack of means and the economic recession coupled with the country's precarious position on the international scene, where it had no allies until the signature of the Triple Alliance in 1882, rendered any potential expansionist undertaking prohibitive.

Nevertheless, the imperialistic tendencies of identifying and establishing colonies around the world at the end of the 19th century and an impulse for expansion, interlaced with the ancient glory of the Roman Empire and the might of the Italian maritime republics of the Middle Ages captivated parts of the Italian ruling class and of the working strata. In a short period of time dozens of scientific-exploratory societies were established following the European example and the Italian explorers, overlooking the military and economic weakness of their country, dreamed about colonies all over the globe, and set about acquiring them.

So, they turned their attention to the familiar Mediterranean area. It was on the Libyan plains, in the period 1870-1890, that Rome after failures and frustrations secured an informal primacy. Rome fearing French expansionism, especially after the painful Tunisian fiasco in May 1881, concluded an alliance with the Central Powers. The relative improvement of its diplomatic position did not however bring about palpable results in the Mediterranean, since in July 1882 it missed the golden opportunity of consolidating in Egypt on Britain's side.

Since its efforts in the Mediterranean were unsuccessful Italy settled for an inferior alternative, the more distant, less familiar, less fertile, and strategically less important Red Sea where, since 1870, it had acquired the ownership of the obscure Assab. Having Assab as the starting-point of an expansionist policy, Rome expanded its influence on the surrounding African territories too, occupied Massawa in 1885 and founded its first colony, Eritrea in 1890. The seizure of the port of Massawa and Rome's aggressive policy in the region irritated Emperor Yohannes of Ethiopia. The Italo-Ethiopian relations, sometimes friendly sometimes strained during the reign of Yohannes and Menelik, experienced fluctuations and had a profound effect on later developments. Menelik put a violent end to the Italian ambitions and aspirations in Ethiopia with the famous battle of Adwa, in 1896.

The debacle of the Italian arms in this battle did not mean the forfeiture of interests and the automatic withdrawal from Eastern Africa. It did however, signify the neutralization of the Italian colonial project in Africa for fifteen years. That is to say that whereas Rome retained its dominions in the Red Sea and in the Indian Ocean

during the post Adwa era, it did not undertake a large-scale operation until 1911, when it also occupied Libya during the Italo-Turkish war (1911-1912).¹

Through the juxtaposition of events and taking into account the particularities of the 1870-1896 period it was attempted to trace the ideological background, the nature and the causes behind the early Italian colonialism, to study its various components, to discover its true identity and to comprehend the historical evolution of the phenomenon as a whole. The theory that "there is no nation that does not automatically attempt to expand, there is no nation that does not seek to go beyond its physical borders"² is valid but it cannot form the explanation of a phenomenon so complex; a phenomenon riddled with contrasts, misrepresentation, tangible contradictions and confusion as to its objectives.

The day after the Unification, Italy was a rural country with minimal foreign trade, insignificant industry, a constantly growing surplus of population and military forces inadequate in every respect. It had to establish law and order, balance the payments deficit and resolve, among others, the matter of the dispute with the Vatican.³ The widely held belief that the establishment of commercial stations, the conduct of trade with the East and the development and expansion of the shipping would bring about the exit out of the economic recession, in which Italy had gone into the last decades of the 19th century, was proven incorrect in practice. It was sufficient however to give impetus and to lend a "financial tone" to the disposition of the Italians to acquire colonies. Simultaneously, geopolitical concerns, associated with the position of the country in the Mediterranean and in Europe, in light of the Berlin conference which saw every Powers bolstered, caused stress and nervousness in Rome. At a time when Britain was annexing Cyprus, Austria-Hungary was gaining control of Bosnia and Herzegovina and France was receiving assurances about its interests in Tunisia, Italy with clean but empty hands felt reasonably wronged. There was no place for Rome's interests in the Mediterranean nor were they being recognized in general and as if that were not enough Austria-Hungary was not relinquishing the irredent Italian provinces. Rome's effort to expand in the Mediterranean or in Europe, interwoven with the safeguarding of the Italian territorial integrity and the establishment of the balance between the Powers, lent to its expansionist designs a geopolitical character coupled with psychological overtones.

¹ For the Italian designs during the 20th century on Libya, its occupation and administration see Aggeliki Sfika-Theodossiou, *Italy in the First World War. Its relations with the Great Powers and Greece*, (Athens, 2004), pp. 26-28, M. Simon Cole, "Secret diplomacy and the cyrenaican settlement of 1917", *The Journal of Italian history*, 2/2 (1979), pp. 258-280, Giacomo De Martino, *Tripoli, Cirene e Cartagine*, (Bologna, 1907), pp. 9-16, Brunello Vigizzi, "Il liberalismo di Giolitti e l'impresa libica", in *Fonti e problemi della politica coloniale italiana*, (Rome, 1996), pp. 1225-1247, Luigi Salvatorelli, *Sommario della Storia d'Italia*, (Turin, 1874), pp. 489-492, Cesare Salvati, *Italia e Francia nel Sahara Orientale*, (Milan, 1929), pp. 64-65.

² Robert Michels, *L'imperialismo Italiano, studi politico-demografici*, (Milan, 1914), p. 105.

³ Giovanni Bosco Naitza, *Il Colonialismo nella storia d'Italia (1882-1949)*, (Florence, 1975), p. 123.

The period 1870-1914 is considered the age of the New-Imperialism, i.e. the outbreak of the expansionist phenomenon. During the "Scramble for Africa" and particularly between 1870 and 1890, Africa was essentially divided among the colonial powers. The Italians, who at the time were beginning to form a collective-national conscience, were deeply affected by the international system and the example of the rest of the Europeans. A colonial consciousness arose, under the influence of Europe and of the expedition societies, within which nationalism, racism, expansionism and the disposition for adventures to places unknown and exotic were merged.⁴ The occupation of colonies was not considered a luxury but a necessity, an asset necessary for the prosperity of the metropolis. The colonies were not presented as a means or an instrument for achieving a goal but as an end in itself. The acquisition of dominions overseas made their owner the arbiter of developments and it guaranteed him a position among the powerful nations of the world. This standing was fiercely sought after by the Italians, a standing that they thought it would negate the economic backwardness, the psychological insecurity resulting from the French provocations and humiliations, the country's fragile integrity and the geopolitical inferiority in the eyes of the Europeans. In this case, there is no question of megalomania but of mimicry, as the possession of colonies was the indicated way to achieve ascendancy for a modern state in the late 19th century.

On the contrary, the issue of megalomania can be raised when "illusions of strength"⁵ and unfounded, fictitious and vague theoretical frameworks have an effect on the figures in charge of the country leading it to a path of confused and incorrect choices. In addition, the enthusiastic zest, the lack of experience and the marked immaturity with which Rome managed its colonial affairs put the geopolitical and financial needs of the country on the back burner. The rather facile installation in Eritrea made the Italians more careless and ambitious to the point that they considered the occupation of Eastern Africa as feasible, vastly overestimating their strength. This confusion between realism and utopian aspirations resulting from ignorance, conceit, a complex of pride and emotion, stemming from the glorious liberation struggles, and lastly from social Darwinism and the white supremacy theories ultimately brought about disaster.⁶ Therefore, the psychological factor, which is usually overlooked, must be also added to all the preceding elements of the Italian colonialism.

Another ideological pillar behind the birth and the formation of the Italian colonialism was the demographic problem, the management of the country's surplus population. The ambitious effort of settling Italian families in Africa and the search for fertile expanses, capable to solve the problems of unemployment and of agriculture, give to the phenomenon under examination a "proletarian standing". Crispi's

⁴ Isabella Rosoni, *La colonia Eritrea, la prima amministrazione coloniale italiana (1880-1912)*, (Macerata, 2006), p. 34.

⁵ Roberto Battaglia, *La prima Guerra d'Africa*, (Turin, 1958), p. 173.

⁶ Christopher Seton-Watson, "Imperialism: the British and Italian experiences compared", in *Italia e Inghilterra nell'età dell'imperialismo*, (ed. E. Serra, C. Seton-Watson), (Milan, 1990), p. 20.

proclamations about annexing cultivable lands and relieving the farmers of the underdeveloped South influenced deeply the programme and the objectives of the Italians who propounded expansionism in Africa. Indecisiveness as to which policy should be pursued in the context of the settlers' installation in Eritrea and the numerous, conflicting and inconstant objectives caused the failure of Leopoldo Franchetti's agricultural-colonization project. The demographic factor, however, present in the proclamations and in political speeches, was practically absent from the designs of the Italian imperialists.

The Italian colonialists and Foreign Minister Pasquale Stanislao Mancini in particular, even distorted the principle of self-determination for which the Italians had fought for a few years before in order to justify the Rome's right to possess and exploit foreign territories. The right of every people to live independently was translated by Mancini into an obligation and a calling of the more powerful people to intervene, to conquer and to civilize indiscriminately.⁷

Whereas the geographical centre of the Italian interest was reasonably the Mediterranean, the government of the country, for reasons already examined, turned its gaze to the Red Sea too. After the gradual conquest of Eritrea, Rome was beset about how it should administer its first colony. Was it an agricultural colony that would in parallel be a host to thousands of Italian settlers? Was it an economic colony that would be industrialized with the injection of capital from the metropolis? Or was it a strategic location that would serve the needs of the Italian fleet? Many years after its capture and amid infighting between the political and the military element in its interior, those in charge still had not reached to a decision.

As far as the Italian policy in the context of the "Ethiopian problem" is concerned, in this case too there was a lack of a clear and unambiguous line.⁸ The militaristic (*politica tigrina*) and the diplomatic line (*politica scioana*) came into conflict and cancelled each other out demonstrating the limitations, the bankruptcy and the dead end in which the Italian colonialism in Africa had found itself. Although the battle of Adwa ended the Italian expansion itself, it did not bring about the end of its contrasts, contradictions and weaknesses. In Somalia the Italians from 1885 until the beginning of the 20th century did not find a way to make the colony profitable and functional. Wanting to evade their moral and financial obligations they chose the model of indirect imperialism, through private companies. This method of colonial administration did not bind Rome and made its presence in the Indian Ocean more discreet. When this type of management also failed, the Italian government was forced in 1904 to take over the administration of the colony to save face and prestige.

⁷ Cerreti, Claudio, "La questione Africana e i geografi del dissenso", in *Colonie africane e cultura italiana fra Ottocento e Novecento. Le esplorazioni e la geografia*, (ed. C. Cerreti), (Rome, 1994), pp. 39-40.

⁸ Ministero della Guerra, *Comando del Corpo di stato maggiore-ufficio storico, Storia militare della colonia Eritrea II*, (Rome, 1936), p. 15.

Carlo Zaghi suggested that the main trait of Italian colonialism is the desire of a "crucial section of the ruling class to adopt a foreign policy", the endorsement or imitation of models not corresponding to the Italian needs. Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) perceived Crispi's presumable efforts to provide arable land to the poor southern peasants a "passionate imperialism, an oratorical imperialism with no economic-financial base", a diversion to obstruct the socialist revolution from erupting. For the Deputy Napoleone Colajanni (1847-1921), Italy through colonies was moralistically trying to secure land and prosperity to the impoverished part of its population. The German historian Theodor Schieder (1908-1984) associated the origins of the phenomenon with the explosion of the population, perhaps to justify his own country's expansionist policies. In any case, in the late 19th century Italy's population was increasing in a disproportional manner to the national economy. Alcide de Gasperi, the Prime Minister from 1945 until 1953, claimed in 1945 that "Italy never considered her African colonies as a tool of imperialism, but rather as a means for absorbing Italy's surplus population". The economist Luigi Einaudi (1874-1961) attributed the genesis of the Italian colonialism to the predominant role of commerce, despite the widespread assumption that the Italian economy of the time was anaemic, in need of foodstuffs' imports (between 1871-1880 and 1881-1890 wheat production fell by 16% whereas imports rose by 80%) and unable to match foreign commercial competition. The author Emilio Sereni (1907-1977) went a step further. He innovatively asserted that finance capital, as Lenin defined it, was existent in Italy as early as the late 1870s when the bank Credito Mobiliare was financing industrial ventures; he also sustained that the involvement of the Rubattino company in Tunis and Assab were examples of efforts to maximize profits in a typical "capitalist imperialism" style. The disapproval of the renowned historian Angelo Del Boca of the way his country subjected and impoverished foreign populations is well documented. Colonies not only did not contribute the slightest to Italy's prosperity as R. Webster conveyed in his book "Industrial Development in Italy 1908-1915" but resulted in an unprecedented loss of lives and money. To the prominent historian Villari, colonies were in no position to facilitate Italian trade or to supply the Italian nascent industries with raw materials since: "[...] the territories acquired by...[Great Britain and France] are for the most part very rich in minerals and other raw materials, whereas those assigned by Italy...are to a large extent mountainous and sterile".⁹

Thus, the economic explanation can be easily rebuffed: the stagnation of Italy's trade and national industry cannot justify a colonial empire. For others however, this very inefficiency and the lack of raw materials were the reasons which led Italy into the colonial arena. Many Italians expected that expansionism would partially contribute to the state's economic recovery. The journalist Leone Carpi maintained that the notion of a flourishing economy as a prerequisite for expansionist policies is a "disregard to history" having probably in mind the Portuguese paradigm. In 1895 the Bulletin of the

⁹ Yemane Mesghenna, *Italian colonialism: a case study of Eritrea 1869-1934. Motive, Praxis and Result*, (Lund, 1988), pp. 7-19.

African Society of Italy revealed: "Given the economic inferiority of Italy compared with other nations; given the lack of a sufficient amount of the raw materials indispensable for the industrial development of the nation; and given the insufficient production of foodstuffs for its own inhabitants: it is only through colonial expansion that an improvement of the economic situation of the nation is possible".

Under this spectre, declarations such as the following by Father Stella on 3 October 1859 in East Africa made an overwhelming impression to those that hoped that the colonies would drag Italy into prosperity: "There are in this province only a small number of inhabitants. There is an immense amount of uncultivated land and fascinating plants all surrounded by the most beautiful and fertile mountains[...]". The Historical Right, members of the Radical Left and even the moderates of the Cabinet approved more or less vigorously the creation of an agricultural colony, the transfer of the excess population to an Italian controlled Africa as opposed to the immigration to inhospitable and abusive settings. Leopoldo Franchetti argued: "Italy is poor in capital but rich in [labor]...We need to invest the wealth which Italy is rich in".¹⁰ Nevertheless, Colajanni estimated the overall colonial expenditure between 1882 and 1897 to more than 400 million lire. The toll in lives he calculated at around 8,000. Senator Tancredi Canonico (1828-1908) in 1895 wondered why the government deemed necessary to send men and money in Africa when the Italian people lived in misery and even died of starvation.¹¹

Thus, the antithetical elements and the inconsistencies render the phenomenon difficult to clarify and to characterize. There are numerous contrasting elements that are not consistent with each other: the Italian economy's lack of funds with the intention to develop the colonies. The state deficit with the building of a powerful fleet. The civilizing task with brutal exploitation. Pacifism with conquests. Respect for self-determination and rule by arms. The interest for the establishment of colonies and the disregard for their development. Insecurity and in the same time megalomania. The theory of aiding the weak and racism. Therefore, in order to reach safer results, it is necessary to include in this analysis all the various aspects of the phenomenon namely the ideological pillars and the economic, proletarian-demographic, commercial, geopolitical, militaristic and psychological factors. Italy had no need of colonies, markets and bases. The economic alibi was meant for the domestic audience. In the opinion of the author, the demographic argument is also unfounded, since the conditions of the colonies did not permit the immigration of Italian settlers en masse.¹² The only valid explanation of the Italian expansionism's manifestation in Africa is the psychological factor, in other words the anxiety deriving from lagging behind and the insecurity caused from the precarious geostrategic situation of the country. After the liberation, the Italians felt that their national completion was the first step in their rise

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 59-63.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 118.

¹² Angelo Omedeo, "La colonia Eritrea, condizioni e problemi" in *Società Italiana per il progresso delle scienze*, (ed. A. Omedeo, V. Peglion, G. Valenti), (Rome, 1913), pp. 72-73.

to the status of a Great Power. Their economic backwardness, in relation to the economies of the industrialized countries, constituted an obstacle to this upward course. It was then decided to bridge the gap and conceal the disadvantage by acquiring colonies. Their occupation would present to the world a powerful and modern Italy, arbiter of developments and, in addition, it would contribute to the stability of the international system. For these reasons, the author would describe Italian colonialism as an essentially psychological phenomenon with geopolitical extensions.

Ultimately the majority of the choices, decisions and actions that the Italian colonialists took, although at the end of the 19th century might have seemed correct, were wrong and ended in complete failure as it is ascertained by the results.¹³ This fact is certainly not attributed to bad luck but to the very nature of the early Italian colonialism. The evolution of the phenomenon had disastrous consequences for Italians and Africans alike because the birth of the expansionist movement itself was a grave error. Its ideological base was not solid and suffered from contradictions and continuous shifts while in practice all the attempts and efforts of the Italian colonialists, were doomed in advance due to a lack of resources. The only way to avoid bloodshed, the burdening of the state's finances and the downfall of the Italian prestige in the world was to avoid the country's involvement in the colonial arena from the beginning. Italy, in 1870 did not have the industrial base, the financial and military means or at the very least the public's universal support to carry out such a demanding and ambitious programme. It was the poor man's colonization (*colonialismo della povera gente*) and the poor man's imperialism (*imperialismo straccione*).¹⁴ Unfortunately, the defeat of 1896 was not enough to bring Italy to its senses and to awaken it from its nationalist and imperialist obsession. On the contrary, it caused a sense of vindictiveness,

¹³ Remaining in control of Eritrea and Somalia, despite the defeat, cannot be counted as a success. Somalia especially was and perhaps remains the poorest region of Africa, see Romolo Onor, *La Somalia Italiana, esame critico dei problemi di economia rurale e di politica economica della colonia*, (Turin, 1925), p. 3. The Italian dominions in general could not "be considered rich countries", see Camille Fidel, *Les colonies italiennes, Le vie technique et industrielle*, (Paris, 1927), p. 1. The only ones who gained something positive from the undertaking were not, of course, the poor farmers of the South but the military and the industrialists in the fields of shipping and arms manufacturing. These were the only "winners" of Italy's involvement in Africa, see Sofia Malgeri-Laura Tutinelli, "Il Risorgimento e il Colonialismo: analogie e differenze", in *Cronache del colonialismo italiano, Il Corno d'Africa*, ed. P. Dieci, M.R. Notarangeli, G. Pagliarulo, (Rome, 1991), pp. 164-165. Perhaps the one positive service that colonialism offered to Italy was the creation of a national identity and the rallying of the Italian society against the "common enemy". At the end of the 19th century this enemy in Africa was the Ethiopians and some Somali chieftains.

¹⁴ Francesco Surdich, *Esplorazioni geografiche e sviluppo del colonialismo nell'età della rivoluzione industriale, fasi e caratteristiche dell'espansione coloniale*, (Florence, 1980), p. 11.

maliciousness and psychological pressure, as evidenced by the unprovoked attack by the fascist regime against Ethiopia in 1935-1936 in which chemical weapons were used.

Japan after the Restoration of 1868 was a poor, backward, semi-feudal, and fragile country. The Boshin civil war of 1868-1869 and the signing of the unequal treaties rendered the nation even more vulnerable amidst the frenetic international competition for concessions and economic privileges. Western domination was not an unfounded fear in a country that was dubbed by historians as “semi-colonized”. The country’s economy would be controlled by foreign financiers for decades to come and the government’s decisions were often susceptible to western pressures if not manipulations. Because of these reasons, but probably even prior to 1868, a reactionary siege mentality was developed among the Meiji leaders and commoners alike. Tōkyō in the midst of its modernization and westernization programme, as a measure to counter the external threat and safeguard the nation’s survival, had always its gaze fixed to the mainland. The late 19th century the Japanese perceived themselves as the underprivileged latecomers that had to catch up with the other contenders in the imperialistic arena. Suffering from limited resources the newborn state could not afford the luxury of distant and thus costly colonies in the European paradigm. Just 5 years after the unification the government was split over the debate about Korea’s possible invasion (seikanron), the nation’s closest neighbour. Remarkably, the following year an overseas colonial expedition was actually undertaken to capture Taiwan; it only failed due to the western and Chinese reactions.

In the second chapter of the Japanese part, the ideological pillars of Japan’s expansion were presented. Pressure groups, surplus population and immigration to inhospitable places, theories about the divinity and invincibility of the Japanese race, pan-Asianism, social Darwinism, the mission to civilize, the quest for prestige and parity, mimicry of western patterns, militarism and an ancient legacy that seemed to justify imperialism formed the theoretical background that explain Japan’s late 19th century quest for an empire. There was a part of the population and of the ruling classes that genuinely believed in these aforementioned factors or at the very least cynically utilized them to promote Japan’s territorial aspirations abroad.

Successful modernization at home, the self-congratulatory ideology of State Shintō and the trend of the time made Japan’s expansion appear as an act of benevolence towards its adjacent, more underdeveloped nations. Before expanding abroad however, the new leadership had to solidify its rule and authority in the Japanese archipelago. Initially the main Japanese islands were brought under submission and were ruled almost despotically by the Satchō leaders that came to dominate the government after their victory over the old regime. Clans were relocated or exterminated, people were taught the standard national language and made into loyal subjects and the entire nation suddenly acquired after centuries of division a common identity (internal colonialism). The pre-modern colonies of Hokkaidō (1869) and Ryūkyū (1879) were incorporated next and secured in the face of foreign penetration.

Chapter three described these developments. Strategic considerations about the safety of the nation spurred Tōkyō towards controlling, absorbing or reforming the decaying nation of Korea (protectorate). Despite the diplomatic classes with Russia and China and the cost in lives and money Korea finally became Japan's in 1910.

Lastly, the acquisition (1895) and the first administrations of Japan's first colony was analysed. The ruthlessness of Tōkyō's rule and the military authority's prolonged domination over the civilian administration reveal the characteristics of Japan's early colonial endeavour. The colony's main utilization was as a base for further expansion towards Southern China (Amoy 1900) a fact that demonstrates the political preponderance of the military and of expansionists circles in the metropolis and periphery alike. Taiwan as the first overseas colony served Japan's colonial experiment; colonial methods previously used in Hokkaidō and Ryūkyū were implemented while the way that Taiwan was managed set the pattern for the future administration of Korea. Kublin Hyman asserted: "It was in Formosa that Japan was to create the pattern of colonialism which was...to be applied in the administration and exploitation of such later conquests as Korea and Manchuria". He also described Japan's rule in Taiwan as "a highly centralized and authoritarian colonial administration".¹⁵ In addition to a colonial laboratory, Taiwan was also seen as ticket for the admission in the prestigious club of imperial powers. Sound administration projected a modern and powerful Japan to domestic, Asian and western audiences able to engage in the grandiose task of civilization. Successful colonization and development of backward territories was part of the westernization process along with modern legal institutions and the construction of railways. In other words, Japan through its colony sought to obtain recognition and equality among the more advanced nations in the world. This explains the urgency, determination and brutality of the colonial state to quell any resistance and transform Taiwan into a seemingly profitable undertaking for the mother country. It also explains Tōkyō's participation in the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901) in compliance and consort with the rest of the Great Powers. However, dispute and finally conflict with Saint-Petersburg (1904-1905) over Korea cannot be attributed only to the quest for equality. Japan in the early 20th century, partially freed from the demeaning unequal treaties, strengthened by the alliance with Britain (1902) and militarily more apt was in a position to dictate and pursue its strategic interests. Far less vulnerable and fearful in the 20th century after the victory in the Russo-Japanese,¹⁶ Japan asserted its claims and finally annexed the strategically vital Korea (1910) dispelling the nightmare of the humiliating Triple intervention (1895).

Japan's lesser economic power relative to the expanding Western nations in the late 1800s signified a comparative inability to sustain colony-acquiring expeditions far

¹⁵ Andres Aviles, *Impacts of Japanese Colonialism on State and Economic Development in Korea and Taiwan, and Its Implications for Democracy*, Masters Dissertation, University of Florida, 2009, p. 21.

¹⁶ Miwa Kimitada, *Nitobe Inazō and the development of colonial theories and practices in prewar Japan*, Research papers, Series A-50 1987, Sophia University Tokyo.

from home. The earliest Japanese colonies were not only geographically close to Japan but culturally as well, as they were populated by peoples sharing, most notably, literary, cultural, and religious affinities such as the Chinese ideograms and Confucianism.¹⁷ Japanese colonialism was an anomaly because Japan was the only non-western power to engage into imperialistic ventures. Furthermore, Japan's anomaly was clear since it was not considered an industrialized capitalist state as the other modern powers were, except for one exception (Italy), at the time it began its imperialist expansion. Scholars generally accepted the view that Japanese colonialism resembled the French model of assimilation more than the British model.¹⁸ But, it also differed from the French and German colonialism in that the colonies of Japan were racially and culturally much more similar to it than the colonies the French or the Germans occupied in Africa and Asia.¹⁹ Racial and cultural affinities gave a moral edge and a rise to the rhetoric of Pan-Asianism which promoted the unity of Asian peoples against the foreign threat. By the end of the 19th century, there were few regions that had not been influenced by some forms of European expansionism. In the Far East and Southeast Asia, China, Korea, Taiwan, and even Japan itself had to cope with the formidable incursions of the European colonial powers. It was within this context that the Japanese imperialism assumed the self-proclaimed role as "the defender against the Western imperialism".²⁰ The Japanese by criticizing the western ruthless exploitation of Asian peoples exalted their rule as benevolent, paternal, subtler, and fundamentally better than the European.²¹ Policy makers in Tōkyō justified their colonial expansion by claiming that Japan was not a conqueror, but a liberator, protecting backward Asia²² from the Western menace.²³ The constant references to the success and benevolence of the

¹⁷ Gunnar Abramson, "Comparative Colonialisms: Variations in Japanese Colonial Policy in Taiwan and Korea, 1895 - 1945," in PSU McNair Scholars Online Journal: Vol. 1: Iss. 1, Article 5 (2004), pp. 11-12.

¹⁸ Peattie claimed that the Japanese colonial policy of assimilation was adopted from the French colonial experience. On the other hand, Michael Weiner claims that the Japanese assimilationist policy was in part promoted by the belief that the racial and cultural affinities would facilitate the amalgamation between the Japanese and colonial subjects. See Jung-Bong Choi, "Mapping Japanese Imperialism onto Postcolonial Criticism" in *Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture*, Vol. 9:3, (2003), p. 335.

¹⁹ Chengpang Lee, "Shadow of the Colonial Power: Kominka and the Failure of the Temple Reorganization Campaign" in *Studies on Asia*, Vol. 2, No.2, (Oct.2012), pp. 122-124.

²⁰ Choi, "Mapping Japanese Imperialism", p. 333.

²¹ Ying Xiong, *Representing Empire: Japanese Colonial Literature in Taiwan and Manchuria*, (Leiden 2014), p. 31.

²² Rescuing the inferior Asian nations was the "yellow man's burden" a paraphrase of Joseph Rudyard Kipling's (1865-1936) famous idiom. See Huei-Ying Kuo, "Learning from the South: Japan's Racial Construction of Southern Chinese, 1895-1941," in *Race and Racism in Modern East Asia: Interactions, Nationalism and Gender*, ed. W. Demel and R. Kowner, (Leiden- Boston 2015), pp. 153-154.

²³ Hwaji Shin, "Colonial legacy of ethno-racial inequality in Japan" in *Theory and Society*, Vol. 39, No. 3/4, Special Issue in Memory of Charles Tilly (1929-2008): Cities, States, Trust, and Rule (May 2010), p. 332.

Japanese colonial rule in contrast to the exploitation by the west, found in official colonial documents point to an inferiority complex.²⁴

For Wu Rwei-Ren, the Japanese colonialism was a unique phenomenon: “There was a geographical, ethnic and cultural proximity between the colonizers and the colonized within this regional empire. This was exceptional among modern empires, which gave rise to a colonial discourse of assimilation that was uniquely Japanese. As a regional empire, Japan was able to exercise a kind of efficient political and military control over its colonies that was out of the question in the European empires. Thus Japan was able to develop a kind of tight economic integration with its colonies that was unprecedented in its European counterparts”.²⁵ Many historians tried to associate early German colonialism with its Japanese counterpart. For example, Gotō Shinpei’s scientific and “biological politics” are considered a direct imitation of German colonial thinking. This kind of influence is only natural for a nation that turned to autocratic Berlin for institutional and modernization models. Many Meiji leaders, among them Gotō himself, had studied in Germany. Pro-German theorists dictated the newborn state’s policies.²⁶ However, Tōkyō’s colonial rule was not an imitation but something utterly Japanese for the historian Ying Xiong.²⁷ Indeed, the ways with which the Japanese penetrated every aspect of their colonies’ daily life, meticulously organized their administration with a myriad of bureaus, controlled and exploited the population are uniquely Japanese. While the Europeans often neglected their colonial subjects soon after asserting their rule, Taiwan suffered from the metropolis’s excessive attention according to the renowned historian Kublin Hayman.

Another distinctive trait of Japan’s expansionism in its earliest stage is the fact that it ran contrary to what Lenin has defined as the highest stage of capitalism, the intensification of western imperialism. For the Japanese history expert Jon Holliday it was “imperialism without capital”.²⁸ Given Japan’s undeveloped capitalism in the late 19th, it appears that the imperialistic expansion was fuelled more on ideology, psychology or strategic considerations than on capital. Hobson’s theory suggests that the existence of excess capital leads to seeking profits overseas. However, during this period Japan had no excess capital, ran a significant trade deficit, and, following the annexation of Taiwan, even had to borrow large amounts from Britain and the United States to finance its rapid industrial expansion. Lenin’s theory of imperialism

²⁴ Leo Tsu-Shin Ching, *Becoming “Japanese” Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation*, (Berkeley London, 2001), p. 109.

²⁵ Wu Rwei-Ren, *The Formosan Ideology: Oriental Colonialism and the Rise of Taiwanese Nationalism, 1895-1945*, VOL. 1, Ph.D Dissertation Chicago, Illinois, June 2003, p. 55.

²⁶ The Japanese restoration was not a social revolution. New privileged oligarchies succeeded the old ones after 1868 and continued ruling in a totalitarian way disregarding the people’s democratic rights. Therefore, the influence of the German authoritarian political thought and its adoption was only complimentary to a well-established Japanese norm. See Hiroshi Tanaka, “Modern Japan and Western Democracy: The Conflict between Liberalism and Nationalism” in *Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (December 1994), 56-59.

²⁷ Xiong, *Representing Empire*, p. 259.

²⁸ Ching, “*Becoming ‘Japanese’*”, p. 10.

advocated that the capitalists wanted to employ surplus capital abroad to achieve higher profits than in the domestic market. This does not appear to apply to Imperial Japan, which throughout this period had been tormented by the lack of sufficient arable land and raw materials alike.²⁹ For instance, most of the funds from foreign debt following the acquisition of Taiwan went for military expenditure, and only 3% of the funds went for the development of Japan's colonies. Schumpeter's theory appears to have more validity. He wrote that imperialism represented the survival of older social structures, such as the warrior class, within a capitalist economy³⁰. This theory seems to partially explain the attitude of Japan's leaders towards imperialistic expansion.³¹

Japanese imperialism is often characterized as "self-defensive" imperialism or "petty" imperialism. The petty imperialism theory was first expressed by the economic analyst Takahashi Kamekichi (1891-1977) in 1927 to prove the qualitative difference between the advanced capitalist states like Britain or Germany and Japan.³² Japanese imperialistic aggression in the nineteenth century was generated under pre-capitalistic economic conditions. At the time, the Japanese economy was mainly based on agricultural production while the production systems were semi-feudal.³³ For Takahashi, Japan's expansion was in response of external circumstances and cannot be explained simply by the needs or demands of the capitalistic class. The Marxist scholar Inomata Tsunao described 19th century Japan as a developing country, which had not yet reached the stage of finance capital but had adopted imperialist policies as a reaction to the western penetration in Asia.³⁴ O. Tanin and E. Yohan, authors of the work *Militarism and Fascism in Japan* (1934) stated that until the Russo-Japanese War, Japanese imperialism was not a product of finance capital since the solid foundation of large-scale industry was absent and Japan's domestic market was underdeveloped.³⁵ Illustrious historians such as Mark Peattie and Hilary Conroy agreed that economic factors were not decisive in the shaping of Japan's early expansion. Yanaihara Tadao, the nation's most influential colonial expert, claimed that Japanese imperialism had

²⁹ Frederic Courtland Penfield, "Japan's Commercial Aspirations" in *The North American Review*, Vol. 181, No. 588 (Nov., 1905), pp. 667-669.

³⁰ The Marxist Kōza school of thought saw feudal remnants operating in the period following the Meiji Restoration; "Kōza-ha scholarship emphasized the backwardness of Japan but also the peculiar symbiosis of the imperial system, hasty industrialization and the impotency of a poverty-stricken agriculture sector due to parasite landlordism, which made up the Japanese characteristics of capitalism". See Daisuke Furuya, "A Historiography in Modern Japan: the laborious quest for identity" in *Scandia: tidskrift för historisk forskning*, Vol. 68, No 1 (2002), p. 128.

³¹ Hui Ju Chang, *Victorian Japan in Taiwan Transmission and Impact of the 'Modern' upon the Architecture of Japanese Authority, 1853-1919*, Ph.D Dissertation, University of Sheffield (December 2014), pp. 259-260.

³² Germaine A. Hoston, "Marxism and Japanese Expansionism: Takahashi Kamekichi and the Theory of 'Petty Imperialism'" in *Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Winter, 1984), pp. 10-18.

³³ Kun Lee, "Political Culture in the "Advocacy of an Expedition to Korea" in the 1870S: An Aspect of Japanese Imperialism" in *Korea Journal of Population and Development*, Vol. 23, No 1, (July 1994), pp. 99-100.

³⁴ Peter Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895-1910*, (London-Berkeley, 1995), pp. 434-435.

³⁵ Susan C. Townsend, *Yanaihara Tadao and Japanese Colonial Policy: Redeeming Empire*, pp. 78-79.

more to do with the Euro-American imperialist competition and less with the export of financial capital, the formation of monopolies and overproduction. Failure to reach the stage of monopoly capitalism meant that Japan in the late 19th century was in “an earlier stage of imperialism”, and Japan’s imperialism was “a non-imperialist nation’s practice of imperialism”.³⁶ For the author early Japan engaged in the race for colonies for reasons of geostrategic concerns connected to prestige and international diplomacy. The scholar Okakura Kakuzō or Tenshin (1862-1913) rightfully declared in the aftermath of the Sino-Japanese war: “as long as Japan indulged in the gentle arts of peace she had been regarded as barbarous, but victory in war had induced the foreigners to call Japan civilized.” Japanese politicians learnt “that imperialism and military dominance were indicators for civilization, whilst peace and closure denoted semi-civilized societies”.³⁷ Tōkyō instead of being occupied itself by the West chose the road of militarism, imperial prestige, and colonial expansion. The path to survival and the right to exist passed through international recognition; modernization, militarism and the possession of colonies in the 19th century commanded respect. With the goal of augmenting their international standing and thus their country’s chances to survive the frenetic race for expansion, Japanese policy makers chose to side with the Western imperialists rather than the backward and victimized non-western nations.

Many scholars compare the Japanese case of the 19th century with the British or German one. Although Britain was also an island state, it was technologically developed, robust, in possession of the most powerful fleet and most importantly most extensive empire in the world. The German Empire, although it too was formed late (1871) and bedevilled like Japan by the problem of overpopulation, did not share the same concerns about securing its independence as it was the superpower of the era, industrialized and militarily all-powerful the very next day after its unification. The indisputable similarity between the two states in the 19th century was the wide spread narrative of the “underprivileged latecomer” utilized by both states to justify their intention to upturn the international system’s status quo. Historians had argued that both Meiji Japan and Imperial Germany pursued a reactionary, authoritarian modernization that led eventually to totalitarianism. Even though this statement holds some validity for the 20th century, in the end of the 19th their potential, their aspirations and policies were diametrically different. Even if the political elites in both countries vigorously attempted to catch up with the rest of the world their actual differences were chaotic.³⁸ Militarily and politically Germany was a superpower;

³⁶ Ching, “*Becoming ‘Japanese’*”, (Richmond 2000), pp. 23-24.

³⁷ Chang, *Victorian Japan*, p. 279.

³⁸ For example, in the years before the Meiji restoration the Krupp shipyards, produced ten times the number of steamships with more than forty times the horsepower of those produced by the Nagasaki shipyards, Japan's largest. See Richard J. Samuels, “Reinventing Security: Japan since Meiji” in *Daedalus*, Vol. 120, No. 4, Searching for Security in a Global Economy (Fall, 1991), p. 49. Even as late as 1894 Japan had only 657,269 tons of merchant shipping. See Penfield, “Japan's Commercial Aspirations” p. 674.

economically it was highly industrialized and its banks and merchant class invested and active all over the world. On the other hand, Japan was feeble militarily, politically insignificant and economically backward. For instance, according to the historian L.H. Gann, Japanese banks never had an excessive supply of capital to be invested abroad before or during World War I. "On the contrary", writes Gann, "one of Japan's main economic problems was an extreme shortage of capital".³⁹ Modernization and commercial or territorial expansion was pursued with great sacrifices made by the central state and not by individuals infused with entrepreneurial spirit.⁴⁰

Italian and German colonialisms share indubitably some common ground according to the historian Carlo Ghisalberti, who claims that both arose from private initiatives, missionaries and explorers that gave publicity to colonial matters among their contemporary compatriots. Moreover both states, embracing the prevailing militaristic and chauvinistic concepts of the late 19th century, aspired to imperial greatness; in this respect the inspiring, influential effect of Rome's imperial heritage was matched by Germany's world domination and Kaiser Wilhelm's hegemonic ambitions.⁴¹ Furthermore, upon the aftermath of the Italian and German states' formation, the ruling classes and the political leadership, personified by Bismarck and Cavour respectively, appeared disinterested about colonial expansion, having to confront more urgent socio-economic problems. According to Ghisalberti, the Italian and German governments never undertook seriously the project of establishing penal colonies and finally, both states happened to release their dominions abruptly after military defeat (officially in 1919 for Germany, 1947 for Italy), avoiding the decolonisation mess and the traumatic period experienced by other ex-colonial states, a fact that gave them the opportunity to acknowledge and reconcile with their oppressive past.⁴² For the German historian, Holger Afflerbach, besides the obvious commonalities of overpopulation and fear of being left out by the British and the French, early Germany and early Italy demonstrated the same reliance on the military in Africa. In other words, the military was the main factor behind the pursuit of colonial acquisitions and the means of their subsequent administration.⁴³ However, he observed that the capacity and the prestige that the German forces enjoyed in Africa was superior to the Italian, particularly in the aftermath of the Adwa battle.⁴⁴

³⁹ Choi, "Mapping Japanese Imperialism", p. 330.

⁴⁰ Mark R. Thompson, "Japan's 'German Path' and Pacific Asia's 'Flying Geese'" in *Asian Journal of Social Science*, Vol. 38, No. 5 (2010), pp. 697-704.

⁴¹ Carlo Ghisalberti, "Due colonialismi a confronto: Italia e Germania nella loro espansione oltremare sino alla prima guerra mondiale", *Clio Rivista trimestrale di studi storici*, 33/2 (1997), pp. 329-333.

⁴² Ibid., pp. 335-340.

⁴³ Holger Afflerbach, "«Duo quum faciunt idem...» Militärische Aspekte der deutschen und italienischen Kolonialgeschichte vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg" in *Annali dell'Istituto Storico Italo-Germanico*, vol. 24, (Trento, 1998), pp. 116-117, 130-131.

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 137-139.

In the author's view, it is imperative to re-enact the basic steps of the early German colonialism in order to examine its nature and eventually draw some more accurate conclusions in regard to its similarity with the Italian and the Japanese cases. The fact that in the late 1890s Imperial Germany launched an aggressive world policy is well known. Political, economic and military predominance led the ruling classes of the Wilhelmine period to pursue a European and global superpower status.⁴⁵ It is worth asking however, how did Germany handle the first challenges concerning the heated colonial debate before the consolidation of its overwhelming power. Presenting the initial colonial policy of the Bismarckian era in summary and outlining the leading expansionist ideologies is essential in order to shed some light on the early German colonial policy. For this reason, we will briefly demonstrate the way that Berlin operated in Africa during the acquisition of its first colony, Namibia, and how it contrasted the acquisition of Italian Eritrea and Japanese Taiwan.

Bismarck's famous statement on 5 December 1888 that his "map of Africa was in Europe", meant that his priority was to prevent the formation of a hostile coalition that threatened Germany's hegemonial status in Europe by diverting tensions in the colonial periphery.⁴⁶ Despite his belief that the connection between colonies and commerce was illusive, Bismarck finally decided to reluctantly back the expansionists' undertakings in order to appease them although he left the initiative to those experienced entrepreneurs, who were adventurist enough. In the 1870-1880s many of the exploration and scientific missions abroad were subsidized by the Deutsche Bank and the Diskontogesellschaft bank. During the 1882-1885 economic depression in Europe, the national-liberal Deputy Friedrich Adolf Hammacher (1824-1904) was claiming in the parliament: "The surplus production crisis could be surpassed by the opening of new trade outlets". Colonial propaganda, influencing the public opinion, stepped in to highlight the obvious solution: colonization could resolve the social and financial strains deriving from the crisis. Amid this climate, in the summer of 1883, the merchant Franz Adolf Eduard Lüderitz (1834-1886) acquired 900 square kilometres in Angra Pequena, in modern day Namibia from the local chieftains. Soon after, he stipulated a convention with prominent bankers and industrialists, in anticipation of Berlin's typical official approval. Bismarck having established a mutual understanding with French president Ferry, in regard to Madagascar, Tonkin and Tunisia, as already explained, opted for the isolation of London. The Triple alliance, the Russian-British antagonism in Afghanistan and the precarious British position in Egypt gave a clear advantage to the German side. On 24 April 1884 Berlin declared that the German citizens and their properties in Namibia would be from then on under the state's protection. The British authorities of the Cape posed obstacles to the German penetration as they were already doing in the Fiji Islands, where German firms had

⁴⁵ Roger Fletcher, " Revisionism and Wilhelmine Imperialism", *Journal of Contemporary History*, n. 23/3, (July 1988), pp. 349-350.

⁴⁶ Wolfgang J. Mommsen, "Bismarck, the Concert of Europe, and the Future of West Africa, 1883-1885", in *Bismarck, Europe and Africa. The Berlin Conference 1884-1885 and the onset of Partition*, ed. S. Forster, W. J. Mommsen, R. Robinson, (New York, 1988), pp. 152-153.

acquired sugar plantations in 1885. Britain's ambassador in Berlin, was scolded during a meeting with the chancellor and warned that if his government continued to ignore legitimate German rights in the Pacific, it would render its position vulnerable against the other powers in Egypt.

Gustav Nachtigal, the German consul in Tunis, acting as imperial commissioner on the Chancellor's orders reached Cameroon, Togo and any other region in which German financial interests were active, especially the shipbuilding-trade company Woermann, and raised the national flag defying London. Berlin's agents acting resolutely expanded the boundaries of what had become thanks to Lüderitz the German South West Africa and founded the colonies of Togoland and Cameroon in July 1884. A heated rivalry erupted in East Africa amidst the press's battle cries, between German and British agents for the mainland possessions of the Zanzibari Sultan. The petty bourgeoisie always susceptible to nationalistic demagoguery and illusions of splendour backed Bismarck on the 28 October 1884 elections.⁴⁷ The historian Hans-Ulrich Wehler identified Bismarck's late bid for colonies as "social imperialism" since its main aim was to "preserve the supremacy of the traditional ruling elites and the authoritarian power structure within the so-called Kaiserreich".⁴⁸

Between the middle of the 19th century and the early 20th two perceptions dominated the German colonial ideology. The "emigrationist" theory dictated the establishment of settlement-farming colonies as the answer to the vast overpopulation problem and the subsequent social issues that derived from it, which in turn led to the massive 19th century emigration flow. In this way Germany's cultural and economic loss was transformed into overseas societies whose way of life, culture and economic contribution with the motherland would be protected by the German government.⁴⁹ The German population rose from 41 million in 1871 to 50 million in 1890. In the three years between 1880 and 1882 half a million-people immigrated to the Americas.⁵⁰ The emigrationist advocates set their sights on South America and specifically on Argentina as the most suitable host. Moreover, German commercial influence (informal imperialism) had already penetrated the region in a number of ways: capital investments, military presence, establishment of shipping lines, banks, factories.⁵¹

In contrast, the economic theory viewed colonies as supplements to Germany's industrial and commercial development. Instead of large scale settlements, the importation of raw materials and agricultural goods as well as the formation of new trade opportunities were envisioned.⁵² Eventual economic depressions or

⁴⁷ Arkadij Erusalimskij Samsonovic, *Bismarck: Diplomazia e Militarismo*, (Rome, 1969), pp. 235-247

⁴⁸ John Lowe, *The Great Powers and the German Problem (1865-1925)*, (London, 1994), p. 78.

⁴⁹ Woodruff D. Smith, "The Ideology of German Colonialism, 1840-1906", *The Journal of Modern History*, n. 46/4 (Dec., 1974), pp. 641-643.

⁵⁰ W. O. Henderson, *Studies in German colonial history*, (London, 1962), p. 44.

⁵¹ Ian L. D. Forbes, "Social Imperialism and Wilhelmine Germany", *The Historical Journal*, n. 22/2 (Jun., 1979), pp. 334-335.

⁵² The chancellor's expectations that colonies could be administered informally, by British type chartered associations, were soon dispelled and resorting to Reichstag's contribution was unavoidable.

overproduction problems would be resolved by an "export offensive" both overseas and in Europe; a relentless, omnipresent economic penetration under the aegis of central interventism was achieved before the turn of the century and at the same time safeguards against disruptive internal (liberal) social forces or foreign competition were put in place. German trade volume had been roughly doubling every fifteen years, from the 1840s to the 1910s and the country had progressively become a leading player on the stage of international trade. German industrialists and capitalists were interested in the tropical colonies, as reservoirs of raw materials such as rubber for their ever-expanding industries. Amidst the strenuous 19th century economic antagonism, Berlin's technical innovations, industrial reorganization (conglomeration) and policies of aggressive investment and economic expansion rendered Germany the world's major economic power, overthrowing the British at the end of the century.⁵³

Ideologically, the proponents of German expansion rarely brought up the justifying schemes of the civilizing mission of the third world's unfortunates, so beloved by the French, British and Italian colonialists. Instead they were prone to instil the concept of work ethic to the colonized and to rationally exploit natural resources, securing the maximum profitability. When it came to colonies, business was priority and civilization had to wait. The explorer Carl Peters (1856-1918) once wrote: "all colonial establishments are in essence a business for the states". Theodor Gotthilf Leutwein (1849 -1921), Southwest Africa's governor from 1894 to 1904, conformingly stated: "The main purpose of all colonization is, if one leaves all made-up idealism and humanitarianism aside, a business. The colonizing race does not want to bring happiness to the indigenous population but looks after its own advantage and profit. So therefore, there is only one guideline for colonization and that is the pursuit of profitable business".⁵⁴

This brief outline is sufficient to help us trace the colossal gap between the early Italian, Japanese and German colonialism, three cases that one could argue that they sprang out from identical ideological frameworks. These states were nurtured in the 19th century bigoted, militaristic, atavistic, pro-expansionist framework and were equally tormented by the population surplus question. Another interesting analogy was the ruling dynasties' inclination towards colonialism and some of their members' enthusiastic participation in the endeavour. Beyond these points only striking inconsistencies are noticed. The most apparent is certainly the difference of their economic, commercial and mainly of their industrial capabilities. As far as Germany is concerned the economic explanation of imperialism makes sense. By the 1890s, it was an "economic giant with the world's most advanced technology and with a more

Togo, Cameroon, Kiaochow and the Pacific colonies were acquired and administered as "economic" colonies whereas Southwest Africa was meant to as an agricultural settlement. See Smith, "The Ideology of German Colonialism", pp. 657-658.

⁵³ Woodruff D. Smith, *German Colonial Empire*, (Ann Arbor, 1998), pp. 13-17.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 195-209.

efficient business structure and a higher investment rate than Britain".⁵⁵ Germany had already reached the highest level of capitalism (monopoly capitalism), that justified every economic theory of imperialist expansion. The eventuality of exclusion from the world's markets in a state so interconnected and reliant on trade was an actual menace whereas the Italian or Japanese call for raw materials was more elusive than real, a mere justification pretext. Germany actually needed rubber, chemicals, lumber for its industries and markets to export its surplus capital and its manufactured products. German entrepreneurs clashed with their French and British counterparts all over the globe in the race for concessions and privileges and demonstrated a mature capitalistic disposition towards investment. When Berlin could not contribute to high risk enterprises or support its colonies' infrastructural development, there were bankers and components of the politico-commerce-industrial complex ready to step in. As Bismarck wished to involve the government as little as possible financially and administratively in Africa these businessmen invested not heavily but in a consistent way, inconceivable in Rome or Tōkyō. In Italy and Japan, as we have seen, the industrial and foodstuff production could not cope with the demands. Indeed, Italy was importing capitals from France and Germany, and produced agricultural goods whereas Japan's anaemic economy and meagre exports weighted upon the state budget. Furthermore, German expansionism was directed wherever business opportunities arose and established itself in regions that offered some kind of future profitability even if in some cases cash influxes were required from Berlin. On the contrary, the Italian equivalent was aimlessly directed at any available or suggested region, ending up controlling Eritrea and Somalia, maybe the most destitute territories in Africa after failing to acquire more vital regions. In Ethiopia, the Italians encountered the opposition of the most consolidated and militant African state. Japan, on the other hand after a series of humiliations had managed to acquire by 1895 only Taiwan, an unsanitary, underdeveloped, undesired island in the Far East. The locals expressed their loyalty to Beijing on numerous occasions, established two autonomous states and fought the hated invaders with everything they got for years. Conversely, no one claims that Namibia and Tanganyika were peaceful and rich worldly paradises; financially the majority of the German colonies relied on government support and, despite the investments, were not particularly profitable.⁵⁶ Nor could someone argue that Berlin invested heavily in its colonies; none of the colonial powers did (the bulk of the British investments were not in its colonies but in America). Yet, they had been chosen in order to satisfy German interests and produce profits based on sound capitalistic-profit making reasoning and also to contest in equal terms the British and French imperial monopoly. Berlin did not contend itself with leftovers.

This brings us to our next point. Germany after defeating Denmark (1864), Austria (1866) and France (1871) was vested in the prestigious aura of the 19th century rising world power. Energetic and vigorous, after centuries of internal division, it

⁵⁵ Smith, *German Colonial Empire*, p. 119.

⁵⁶ L. H. Gann, Peter Duignan, *The rulers of German Africa, 1884-1914*, (Stanford, 1997), p. 56.

launched itself forward. Already dominant in Europe, it envisioned for itself the role of a global superpower (weltpolitik) namely after 1891. Militarily superior, politically stable, industrially thriving it soon threatened to overthrow all the other protagonists. Equally important was the awareness of this power. Imperial Germany even before the Wilhelmine era not only spoke on equal terms in the aftermath of its foundation with the long-standing empires, even though it still did not possess a formidable fleet, but defied and even menaced and provoked the fear of its opponents. The initial concerns about the creation of a rival coalition supposedly aimed at liquidating the newly founded empire were rebuffed by Bismarck's brilliant divide and rule policy and put at ease until the First World War. Despite Germany's aggressive tactics and vulnerable strategic position, the country did not engage in any offensive or defensive European campaigns up until 1914.

In the late 1870s Germany, military powerful and at the forefront of the global trade and industry, appeared attractive to Meiji leaders. By the 1880s German patterns appeared more adaptable to the Japanese case and German political theory was in line with Japanese conservative, nationalistic attitudes as opposed to those theories promulgated by the likes of Finance Minister Ōkuma Shigenobu, who was advocating the British-American liberal thought⁵⁷ and a British style constitution.⁵⁸ It was not only the educational system or the studies in the medical field that was adopted from the prestigious German model but a series of reforms, institutions and ideas that were all employed in the process of nation building and modernising.⁵⁹ Their implementation was applicable due to the "affinity of the philosophical basis" of Japan's and imperial Germany's political systems and their "ethno-centric nationalism" according to the historian Bernd Martin. Indeed, the national ideology on which post 1871 Germany was founded on was Christian religion and long standing feudal-agrarian folkloric elements that provided a common origin and culture. As for the education, in the new born German Empire it revolved around moral discipline, obedience to one's superiors, Christian ethics and the exaltation of the German nationality. The indoctrination to

⁵⁷ In the 1870s the ideas of liberalism and representative government were well spread thanks to the popular work of the British philosopher Herbert Spencer. See John D. Pierson, "The Early Liberal Thought of Tokutomi Sohō. Some Problems of Western Social Theory in Meiji Japan" in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Summer, 1974), pp. 199-201, pp. 199-224. Spencer is considered the founder of the Social Darwinism theory, which influenced greatly the Japanese intelligentsia and ruling classes. Accelerated economic development would allow Japan to eventually obtain its place among the "civilized" nations. See Sherrie Cross, "Prestige and Comfort: The development of Social Darwinism in early Meiji Japan, and the role of Edward Sylvester Morse" in *Annals of Science*, Vol. 53 (4), pp. 330-332, pp. 323-344.

⁵⁸ Rolf-Harald Wippich, "Infected with German Measles: Meiji Japan Under German Cultural Influence" in *History of European Ideas*, Vol. 20, No. 1-3 (1995), pp. 339-402, pp. 399-403.

⁵⁹ For others, Japan had more in common with 19th century Tsarist Russia: reliance on western technology, employment of foreign advisors, adoption of German and Austrian models and the late 19th century modernization reforms were identical elements in both cases. See Cyril Black, *The Modernization of Japan and Russia: A Comparative Study (Perspectives on modernization)*, (New York 1975), pp. 126-135.

patriotic and military duty was analogous to the Japanese practices.⁶⁰ A growing orientation towards German patterns in law, economic and social policy, was promoted in the early 1880s as a conservative response to the Liberal Party and as a legal basis for revising the unequal treaties.⁶¹ German legal and constitutional models appeared to be more suitable and conforming with the Japanese norms of sovereign power and the role of the emperor.⁶² A centralized, statist type of governance, the existence of noble elites with bureaucratic functions, the dominant role of the military and the patriotic-nationalistic ideals that seemed to shape the relationship between the people and its leaders were up to a certain degree commonly shared by the two societies.⁶³ The modern German state, constructed around the figure of the monarch, was established through "iron and blood" not vote and parliaments just as the Japanese state was in 1868.⁶⁴ Nevertheless by the end of the 19th century, besides these apparent similarities the two states had nothing else in common.⁶⁵

The chaotic difference between Germany's industrial and military capacity as a global superpower and an Asian, agrarian island state in the margin of the modernised world shaped their respective relations and attitudes concerning their foreign policy. Japanese economy was far less industrialized than Germany's and its trade largely controlled by foreign merchants enjoying treaty privileges. In regard to the current thesis, which highlights Italy's and Japan's expansionist tendencies and early colonial policy it has to be stressed once again that these two states were relegated to secondary international actors whereas Germany was the rising world power of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The fact that all three were formed late, willing to challenge the

⁶⁰ Wippich, "Infected with German Measles", pp. 83-85.

⁶¹ The advocate of modernization with less westernization, statesman Inoue Kowashi (1844-1895) favoured the more stable and similar "with regard to the circumstances of its unification" Prussian state model over the French, which had produced three revolutions between 1830 and 1871 and the American one that had led to the Civil War (1861-1865). In 1881, he suggested that if the government desired to make the Japanese more conservative-minded it should encourage the study of the German language. See Sukehiro Hirakawa, *Japan's Love-Hate Relationship with the West*, (Folkestone 2005), pp. 121-122.

⁶² The legal thinking of jurists such as Heinrich Rudolf Hermann Friedrich von Gneist (1816-1895) and of sociologists like Lorenz von Stein (1815-1890), whom Itō Hirobumi met in his 1882-1883 visit while searching for models for the future Japanese constitution, were transplanted in law schools, universities and legislative committees by the advisor Carl Friedrich Hermann Roesler (1834-1894). The adopted model was the one of the Prussian bureaucratic state, which had successfully reformed its economic, social and military institutions in the first half of the 19th century without representative institutions. See Erik Grimmer-Solem, "German Social Science, Meiji Conservatism, and the Peculiarities of Japanese History" in *Journal of World History*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (2005), pp. 197-202, pp. 187-222.

⁶³ Franco Mazzei, "La Risposta Del Giappone Alla Sfida Modernizzante dell'Occidente" in *1868 Italia-Giappone: Intrecci Culturali*, edit. Rosa Caroli, (Venice 2008), p.121, pp. 115-128.

⁶⁴ Bernd Martin, *Japan and Germany in the Modern World*, (Oxford, 1995), pp. 17-35.

⁶⁵ Similarly, the Meiji Restoration was a typical "revolution from the above" brought about by elements of the upper classes (court members, samurai of any rank) and shaped in their favour, according to their theories. In contrast, the Italian unification process (1848-1871) was based on popular support for emancipation and liberal ideals as formulated by Giuseppe Mazzini. It should be also noted that the unification was solidified by a series of local referenda and not by the Piedmont dynasty and army, despite its central role. In late 19th century Germany and Japan, the oligarchic leadership utilized monarchical authority and retarded democratization to strengthen its position. See Ikegami, "Citizenship and National Identity", pp. 218-219.

established state of affairs, which was perceived as unfair, and suffered from overpopulation are certainly important but not fundamental for the comprehension of their foreign policies and territorial aspirations. Italian and Japanese strategic insecurity, the anxiety and psychological pressure stemming from it, the underdeveloped economies, their limited military capabilities and marginalized international position in the second half of the 19th century were immensely more influential to their colonial policies. Thus, it is self-evident that these two countries were nowhere near on being on par with Germany, France or Britain. Instead they were closer at being "colonized", attacked or economically penetrated themselves.

Scholars tend to compare Germany's and Japan's colonial history just because the history of early Italian colonialism has been neglected domestically and internationally. The economic weakness behind the Italian colonial project, the fact that it constituted an anomaly that did not conform to the widely accepted Marxist interpretation of imperialism, prompted the researchers to overlook and ignore the issue. But it is not only the foreign historiography which ignored the phenomenon. Even in Italy itself, over the last thirty years and until recently the country's colonial history was a secondary and forgotten part of the national history. It seems that the Italian governments and academic circles had no desire to allow or to engage into a systematic study of the Italian presence in Africa, an event which would confront them with the mistakes of the past.⁶⁶ The ignorance, the disregard for the foreign sources, the ambiguity and the lack of debate perpetuated the study of the events with blinkers on: the inconsistencies, the contradictions, the myths and the stereotypes about a "humanitarian" and "different" colonial administration.⁶⁷ In the post-war period no scientific study was undertaken by the State, which additionally allowed access to the relevant files of the Ministry of the Colonies to very few historians. The various obstacles and the limited access were holding back the work of aspiring researchers and provided ample proof of the statesmen's desire to conceal the reality, the defeats and their mistakes. Thus is explained, at least partially, the lack of comprehensive scientific studies on the matter and the relatively limited until recently bibliography.

The sole project towards the direction of authoring and publishing a complete official account of the Italian presence in Africa came to fruition with the publication of the *L'Italia in Africa* series in 1952. In the 50 volumes of this work the authors, most of them former officials and administrators of the Italian dominions, did everything possible to underline and to exalt the diversity of the Italian presence in relation to the other colonialists. Giorgio Rochat, an expert in colonial matters, argued however that the greater part of the 50 volumes was lacking "any requisites of seriousness and

⁶⁶ Ruth Ben-Ghiat and Mia Fuller, "Introduction" in *Italian colonialism*, ed. M. Fuller, R. Ben-Ghiat, (New York, 2005), pp. 1-3.

⁶⁷ Giuseppe Finaldi, "Adowa and the historiography of Italian colonialism", *Modern Italy*, 2/1 (1997), pp. 91-92.

scientific nature".⁶⁸ In post-war Italy the first impartial work on this subject that fully met the scientific historiographical criteria was the *La Prima Guerra d'Africa* by Roberto Battaglia, which was published in 1958. The second one chronologically was *La Guerra Libica (1911-1912)* by Francesco Malgeri in 1970. In the last 20 years, the removal of the restrictions and the renewed interest of the historians for this period gave new impetus to the development of courses and studies about the Italian presence in Africa. The works of G. Calchi Novati, R. Mori, G. Rochat, G. Procacci, C. Zaghi, F. Surdich, N. Labanca, and A. Del Boca offered new interpretations and scientific substance in the study of the phenomenon under examination.⁶⁹

Italian historiography suffers to some extent by the problem of subjectivity. Depending on the political beliefs (communism, liberalism, fascism) of the authors, the events are falsified, suppressed or overstated as seen fit. In our case it can be safely claimed that almost all the literature about the former Italian dominions in Africa that was published between 1922 and 1943 present the subject in an idealized manner, in a light of grandeur, pride, racism and militarism. On the contrary, most of the works that were published after the war, the criminalization of fascism and the rejection of everything that had to do with it, abound with reactivity, dogmatism, fury and emotional charge. The Marxist and liberal historians are usually excessively strict, sarcastic and aphoristic, a fact which of course affects to a large degree the objective and responsible report of events. Many of them, for example, due to humanitarian and economic reasons despise the imperialist aspirations of their ancestors, ignoring or suppressing the fact that the conquest of colonies by the Great Powers was a practice and an event acceptable and normal during the 19th century. I believe that had more serious research been undertaken both on Italy's and Japan's colonialism the myth of the supposed German-Japanese similarities would be torn down.

On the other hand, and despite the ruling classes' unwillingness to recognize Japan's brutality in Asia, Tōkyō's expansion was studied in greater length. Renowned and respected authors like W.G. Beasley, R. Myers and M. Peattie, I. Kiyoshi, R. Storry, A. Iriye, E. Oguma, I. Nish managed to shed light on a topic that, partially due to the linguistic barrier, would have otherwise stayed obscure and little known in western scholarship without their contribution. In recent years, works such as the iconic *Japanese Imperialism, 1894-1945* (1987) and *The Japanese colonial empire, 1895-1945* (1989), *Taiwan in Japan's Empire Building: An Institutional Approach to Colonial Engineering* (2009) attracted international scholarly attention to this sensitive subject. The general tendency in Japanese political discourse since the end of the war is to disclaim the impact of Japanese colonialism and to downplay its war-time criminality. Japanese textbooks by the Ministry of Education provoked the protests of the other Asian nations in the 1980s. Strong protests arose when the Japanese Justice

⁶⁸ Angelo Del Boca, "Myths, suppressions, denials, defaults," in *A place in the sun, Africa in Italian colonial culture from post-unification to the present*, ed. P. Palumbo, (London-Los Angeles-Berkeley, 2003), p. 18.

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 17-20.

Minister called the Nanjing Massacre a “fabrication” and “it’s wrong to call this war of aggression... We were seriously thinking about the liberation of the colonies and the Co-Prosperity Sphere”. The Japanese emperors never formally apologized to the Asian nations for Japan’s war-time atrocities. Japanese expansionism was marginalized and “never became a very important part of the national consciousness”. Some historians tried to rationalize and depict Japan’s colonialism as better than that of the other nations. For example, Wakatsuki Yasuo, a historian specializing in Japan-Korean relations, explained Japan’s expansion as “...an inevitable consequence of global colonialism. And compared to the British or French colonialists, the Japanese were actually better rulers”.⁷⁰

Under these circumstances Japanese historiography is still filled with disputes and contradictions.⁷¹ Until the 1990s those few interested in the Japan’s rule over Taiwan were faced with several obstacles due to the Cold War era’s politics and Taiwan’s delicate situation; it was only then that the official documents of the Japanese administration in the island were finally made accessible to the public.⁷² The liquidation of the Italian and Japanese empires was not a voluntary act; it was a result of Rome’s and Tōkyō’s military defeat in the Second World War. As a consequence, it was not an issue of great political controversy domestically. In addition these two nations did not have a period of gradual decolonization as was the cases for Britain or France. There had been those like Yoshino Sakuzo (1878-1933) and Yanaihara Tadao (1893-1961) who had condemned Japan’s imperial yearnings, but they were few and far between. In the first half of the 20th century, opposition to the empire was neither fashionable nor widespread. To the Japanese the end of empire was and perhaps still is virtually synonymous with the defeat in the war. As the Japanese intellectual opinion moved towards the left in the postwar period, at the same time it attacked imperialism and militarism. Socialist criticism in postwar publications targeted gunkokushugi (militarism) and teikokushugi (imperialism). Nipponshugi (belief in Nippon or ultranationalism) was also subjected to criticism. In a sense, all of Japan has grown to detest and distrust these concepts. In other words, it is not just a socialist belief anymore, but the thinking of an entire generation of Japanese. Whereas in the days of the empire, there were comparatively few voices raised in opposition, in the aftermath of the empire’s dissolution there has been a whole wave of opposition and criticism in

⁷⁰ Leo Tsu-Shin Ching, *Tracing contradictions: Interrogating Japanese colonialism and its discourse*, Ph.D Dissertation, University of California, (1994), 9-17.

⁷¹ The absence of a serious study on the Japanese foreign affairs and early imperialism of the Meiji period due to the historians’ disregard or superficial knowledge of the issue is lamented by the expert Japanese historian Akira Iriye. He argued that the most plausible approach would seem to be a comparative research “in which Japanese foreign affairs are comprehended in comparison with those of other modern nations. Such a study would be useful not only to students of Japanese history but also to modern international history”. See Akira Iriye, “Japan’s Drive To Great-Power Status”, in *The Emergence of Meiji Japan*, ed. M. B. Jansen, (Cambridge 1995), p. 280.

⁷² Toshihiko Matsuda, “Jo, Sōgo sanshō kei toshite no shokuminchi Chōsen to Taiwan” [Introduction, Comparing Colonial Korea and Taiwan as cross-reference] in *Shokuminchi Teikoku Nihon ni okeru shihai to chiki shakai* [The rule and the local society in the Japanese colonial empire], ed. Toshihiko Matsuda, International Research Symposium Kyoto, July 13-16, 2011, pp. 7-9.

retrospect. To some extent this appears to be the case because Japan's empire was associated with the army more than any other institution.⁷³

Colonial Taiwan and Eritrea despite being the first stepping stones towards later expansion have received relatively little attention both inside and outside of Japan and Italy respectively. Japan's decolonization and subsequent subordination to American imperialism not only freed Japan of any responsibility regarding the disintegration of its empire but also interiorized (internalized) its intellectual discourse.⁷⁴ In the same manner Italy's colonial and belligerent past was brushed aside after 1945 when Washington "envisaged Italy's strategic role as bastion of democracy in the Mediterranean as an act of consolidation of the Western block in the making".⁷⁵ Some of these features hold true for postcolonial Germany too.

As deduced from this research, early Japan and Italy shared unique similarities in the dawn of their initial imperial expansion which will be presented henceforth. Both the Italian and the Japanese state builders came from the educated classes and were conscious of their own backwardness. They were aware of the developments abroad; each was fearful of the likely prospect of foreign domination. Therefore, they strove to build up their states to withstand the challenge posed by the Great Powers of the 19th century. Liberalism was only a minor matter in Japan but in Italy it was the driving force behind the country's unification. Liberty promised freedom from foreign encroachment and papal domination. Unification and modernization was a way to achieve this goal: Italy had to enter the system of the European power states or be devoured by foreign tyrants.⁷⁶ Similarly the goal of the Meiji Restoration was to strengthen the anaemic nation in the face of foreign threat. In order to serve this process, the Japanese leaders appealed to symbols of the primordial Japanese nation whereas their Italian counterparts appealed to Roman glory. The House of Savoy or the Japanese Imperial Household had never exerted much influence upon the masses. In both the Japanese and the Italian case, the royal dynasties were used as a favourable institution with which fundamental political change would be brought. Japanese state builders chose to adopt western forms that could be legitimized by their imperial system. In Italy where liberalism was well established it was the liberal constitution (lo statuto 1848) that legitimized the rule of a foreign dynasty upon the country. Despite the Risorgimento and the Meiji Restoration the ruling classes retained their power and blocked major social change. Both state builders were not confronted or challenged by the kind of politicized bourgeoisie that was active in France or Britain. They created centralized states adopting Prussian legal and military doctrines even though in Italy's

⁷³ Ian Nish, "Regaining Confidence -Japan after the Loss of Empire" in *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 15, No. 1, Imperial Hangovers (Jan., 1980), pp.186-187.

⁷⁴ Ching, "Becoming 'Japanese'", pp. 184-186.

⁷⁵ Ilaria Poggiolini, "Italy and Japan: The Price of Defeat in Post WWII International Relations" in *Italy and Japan: How Similar Are They? A Comparative Analysis of Politics, Economics, and International Relations*, ed. S. Beretta, A. Berkofsky, F. Rugge, (Pavia 2014), p. 286.

⁷⁶ Richard J. Samuels, *Machiavelli's children: Leaders and their legacies in Italy and Japan*, (London 2003), p. 21.

case the state remained inefficient.⁷⁷ Immature bourgeois traditions and the common fear of communism transformed Italy and Japan after the First World War into authoritarian states; the loss of political freedom was the price to pay for stability at home and international high standing.

Let's see how both ruling classes responded to the modernization challenge and their political choices. Camillo Benso Cavour the architect of Italy's unification forged a liberal Italy, unified and free of foreign rule. Itō Hirobumi the most influential of the Meiji era's politicians created a constitutional framework that limited popular participation and fortified imperial prerogative. Cavour also used the monarchy to gain domestic support and build a national identity.⁷⁸ In the aftermath of Italy's and Japan's unification this step was imperative; politician Massimo d'Azeglio's alleged phrase that Italy was finally made, but it was now necessary to create the Italians resembles Fukuzawa's famous remark "in Japan we have a government but not yet a nation"⁷⁹. A devout liberal but not a democrat, Cavour knew that autocracies were doomed but believed that the royal institution could be utilized for modernizing purposes. The Meiji leaders, equally cautious, also needed the symbolic power of the emperor but they chose to proceed to modernization by establishing a bureaucratic state. Itō used the throne to legitimize the new regime and to cope with the civil war, the peasant revolts, and the democratic movements, but he was also careful to limit the emperor's powers. Italy was unified by the liberals but in Japan they were just an insignificant group fragmented or purged by the oligarchs. Cavour chose liberalism dressed in the cloak of the Savoy monarchy; Itō opted for authoritarianism under the disguise of parliamentary politics. Whereas Cavour created Italian citizens who actually voted for their king in the 1860 plebiscite, Itō created imperial subjects and established a bureaucratic state to serve the monarchy.⁸⁰

The lack of investment funds, the disconnection between industrialization and expansionism, the ultimately limited dynamic of the Italian and Japanese economies in the late 19th century constitute the most obvious similarities. For the historian Yoshio Asai both of these states had similar "socio-economic characteristics" and comparable industrial development; agricultural production constituted 51,3% of the Italian and 48,4% of the Japanese gross domestic product in 1890. Their main exports at the time were silk, cotton and other agricultural products. Wages were low in relation to the salaries received by workers in more industrially advanced nations and the lack of essential raw materials signified in both cases retardation in the creation of modern

⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 22-23.

⁷⁸ The ruling classes of the latecomer states used the image of the king to create a new national identity, unify the nation and solidify their rule domestically. The king's status was high in Italy and the Kaiser's even higher in Germany. However, the moral authority, divinity and religious reverence of the Meiji emperor had no precedent elsewhere. See James Murdoch, "Japan and Russia" in *The North American Review*, Vol. 170, No. 522 (May, 1900), pp. 610.

⁷⁹ John Lie, *Multiethnic Japan*, (London, 2001), p. 119.

⁸⁰ Samuels, *Machiavelli's children*, pp. 41-51.

industrial plants.⁸¹ Japan was asphyxiating under the trade restriction imposed by the unequal treaties. Italy much like Japan was disgraced by its technological backwardness. In this sense it is once again apparent that the economic justification of Italy's and Japan's expansion seems invalid; the acquisition of colonies as markets for the metropolis' products cannot explain their early drive for an empire.

When the Italian credit system collapsed in 1866 the Finance Ministry sold land expropriated from the Catholic Church, canals, and railways to private firms. In the same manner Matsukata's reforms in the 1880s that promoted privatization to confront the financial crisis in Japan, favoured companies like Mitsui and Mitsubishi; they purchased bankrupted state owned enterprises in mining and manufacturing. The Italian leaders embraced the concept of free trade and turned to foreign financiers to promote their industrialization program. The first Italian railways used funds raised abroad a fact that made foreign control and influence distressing. Banca Commerciale established in 1894, was created by Austrian and German financiers and provided the necessary capital for Italy's industrialization efforts. Furthermore, French financiers owned an enormous part of the Italian debt and French manufacturers dominated the nation's economy until the early 1880s when German capitalists replaced them. Italy's textile industry was in the hands of Swiss capitalists and metallurgy was chiefly controlled by British entrepreneurs.⁸² Meiji leaders refused to become depended on foreign capital and very few of them supported the idea of free trade. Tōkyō selected its buyers carefully and refused to sell assets to foreign interests. Italy due to the lack of domestic private capital turned to foreign sources whereas Japan fearful of western encroachment preferred temporary economic stagnation to foreign domination. Italy adopted the doctrine of free trade that left the country's economy vulnerable until the 1887 protectionist tariff. Meanwhile for a weak nation like Japan protectionism seemed to be the only way forward but the limitations of the unequal treaties meant that Japan's early economy was entirely dominated by the western trade and credit houses. In any case the new states had to prove that they could survive in a competitive industrial world. If they failed, their own sovereignty would pass to the hands of foreign creditors as in the case of Tunisia.⁸³

In the aftermath of their unification both ruling elites sought to complete territorially their formation: the provinces of Veneto (1866) and Lazio (1870) were acquired by the new Italian government while Hokkaidō (1869) and Ryūkyū (1879) were added to the Japanese national body with a sense of urgency by Japan's policy makers. Both nations were in need of reorganization and modernization to catch up with the rest of the advanced states of the 19th century. Thus, they promoted the creation of a common and distinct national identity since nationalism and loyalty to the

⁸¹ Yoshio Asai, "Aspetti comparati su alcune caratteristiche della rivoluzione industriale in Giappone ed in Italia" in *Lo stato liberale italiano e l'età Meiji*, 1st Italo-Japanese Conference of Historical Studies (Rome 23-27 September 1985), pp. 219-224.

⁸² Samuels, *Machiavelli's children*, pp. 76-77.

⁸³ Ibid., pp. 77-79.

state were deemed as sine qua non for the nation's progress. Both ruling elites sought to "construct" Italians and Japanese; like the Japanese, the Italians too had deep memories of a glorious past. Christianity, Roman law, the Renaissance attested to Italy's intellectual and cultural primacy. These ideas exploited appropriately by Rome's state builders animated and mobilized the masses. Likewise, the Japanese created their own national myths about their divine descent and homogeneity.⁸⁴ Education was the medium of this indoctrination. "Moral education" and the "respect of duty" were equally promoted but with a substantial difference: Italy had to take in consideration the resistant influence of the Catholic Church in educational matters whereas in Japan the Meiji governments constructed a new "religion" (State Shintō) through which they further exalted the state and rid themselves of any opposition to their programme.⁸⁵

Centuries of political fragmentation and regionalism challenged the unity of the newborn German, Japanese and Italian states. However, it was only in the latter two that this friction escalated to animosity and division for decades to come. In Italy's riotous southern provinces, the War of Brigandage lasted almost a decade. In the late 1860s the Italian government seriously considered and sponsored exploration missions in remote places with the goal of founding a penal colony to "accommodate" the southern brigands. In Japan, the civil war of 1868-1869 subdued those that were unwilling to accept the new distribution of power; many of them were sent to colonize the inhospitable Hokkaidō. Violence and oppression by the new central governments marked not only two large scale military conflicts but an identical never ending domestic strife. The Italian south and the northern provinces of Japan were initially violently subjugated and then gradually incorporated by the new seats of power. These peripheries were internally colonized and placed in a subordinate position vis-à-vis the centre in political and economic terms. Their population felt conquered and exploited by a foreign tyrant as if they were overseas colonies. On the other hand this situation was constantly fueling Rome's and Tōkyō's strategic vulnerability and insecurity syndrome.

Due to the harsh living conditions, overpopulation and poverty at home many Japanese and Italians decided to leave their respective mother counties and migrate to the Americas. In the late 19th century as we have seen, too few of them actually settled in Taiwan and Eritrea; continuous warfare, political instability, despotic colonial administration and tropical climatic conditions were not exactly what the migrants were looking for. This fact discredits the immigration argument as a valid justification for the Italian and Japanese expansionism. In addition, Japan's and Italy's citizens abroad were not treated with a manner befitting to citizens of the Great Powers or of peer civilized nations. Arduous manual labour, humiliating wages, prejudice and racism

⁸⁴ Marina Tesoro, "Introduzione" in *Monarchia tradizionale, identità nazionale: Germania, Giappone, Italia tra ottocento e novecento*, ed. Marina Tesoro, (Milan 2004), pp. 1-6.

⁸⁵ Shinichiro Murakami, "Nazionalizzazione delle masse e istruzione popolare: note comparative fra il caso giapponese e quello italiano" in *Lo stato liberale italiano e l'età Meiji*, 1st Italo-Japanese Conference of Historical Studies (Rome 23-27 September 1985), pp. 242-244.

were stomached by the desperate and politically unprotected Japanese and Italians in the U.S and elsewhere.⁸⁶ For example, government official Mizuno Jun in 1900 lamented Japan's international position: "...while it is an empire which has possession of its surrounding areas, at the same time it is also a weak, small country which sends its poor overseas as immigrants".⁸⁷ Rome clashed with Paris in its effort to protect the thriving Italian community of Tunisia and to even annex the Regency. Similarly, Tōkyō sought to exert some influence over the Hawaiian kingdom where the bulk of the Japanese immigrants abroad was crammed into and enhance their privileges. Without the means to impose their will, Japan and Italy witnessed in disgust Tunisia and Hawaii being absorbed by the French (1881) and the Americans (1898) respectively. What was even more frustrating and demonstrated how little Rome and Tōkyō mattered in the world stage was the fact that after these annexations, the rights of Italians in Tunisia and Japanese in Hawaii were limited and gradually eliminated in contrast to official reassurances.

Early modern Italy and Japan were not exactly military superpowers. Their military unpreparedness, lengthy defenseless shores and feeble land and sea forces made them appear as possible targets of western aggression not as potential imperial states. The deficiencies and poor performance of the Japanese army in the first Taiwan expedition (1874) and the Satsuma Rebellion (1877) signified Tōkyō's military weakness. Adjustment to western standards and adoption of modern military tactics required more time, effort and money.⁸⁸ The first major victory came against the even more outmoded Chinese (1895) after more than two decades of intense westernization and military buildup. Rome in the eve of its unification, despite being part of the advanced and powerful western "block", was equally vulnerable. The defeats of Lissa and Custoza (1866) against the Austrians, the reluctance to operate away from home for example in Egypt (1882) and the defeats of the Italian army in Africa (1887, 1896) attest to the fact that the nation's army was in dire need of reorganization. Better equipment, improved performance and modern tactics were required if Italy wanted to stand among the Great Powers of the time. Both newborn states initially adopted the French military model but after 1871 they both opted for the more successful German one.

Both ruling classes came to understand that their inferior economic and military status did not allow them to put forward an independent foreign policy according to their national interests. Diplomatic support by one or more superpowers was urgently needed. In a rather inglorious docile way and despite Rome's alliance to Germany and

⁸⁶ The Italians and the Japanese discriminated against the local populations in their own colonies but when they emigrated abroad they were both lamenting and criticizing the discriminative legislation in their host countries.

⁸⁷ Eiji Oguma, *The Boundaries of 'the Japanese': Volume 2: Korea, Taiwan and the Ainu 1868-1945*, (Baldwyn North 2017), p. 47.

⁸⁸ Edward House, a journalist present at the time of the Japanese landings and military campaign in Taiwan, was critical of the outmoded methods employed by the Japanese. See Edward Howard House, *The Japanese Expedition to Formosa*, (Tokyo, 1875), pp. 113-114.

Austria-Hungary (1882) the Italians collaborated closely with London at least as far as their colonial expansion is concerned. Their greatest concern was France. Japan on the other hand was racially, economically, militarily and politically looked down upon and deemed as a primitive and almost savage nation. It was fearful of any western nation with a fleet, especially Russia. Tōkyō due to its vulnerability after the Restoration could not afford to confront or even displease the powers. Before any crucial decision the Japanese Foreign Minister had to humiliatingly consult and secure the foreigners' consent. The nation's first colonial enterprise (1874) was organized in secrecy but was officially renounced due to the foreign protests. Similarly the Italians in order to not dissatisfy even minor players such as the Ottoman Empire and to avoid the powers' disapproval had to act in a compliant way. For example they operated in secrecy to capture Massaua (1885). Their undertaking was staged by London and was in consort with British interests from the beginning to the end. The British stance dictated the Italian actions in China, in San Mun or Sanmen in 1899. In the same way, the Japanese plan to attack Korea (1873-1874) was abandoned partially because of the fear of British or Russian retribution.⁸⁹ It was the American LeGendre, among other American advisors, and the British Kirkwood who influenced if not shaped Japan's imperial agenda. The lesser, peripheral interests of early Italy and Japan were subjected and subordinated to the projects of the Great Powers. Britain as the greater colonial power of the time was not only a model for industrialization, naval power and overseas expansion for these nations; its biddings commanded awe and were binding for these secondary states that aspired to create their own empires. Arguably Berlin took in consideration the interests of the other powers in relation to its foreign policy as well. It was also in search for alliances and support but on its own terms. However, in the end of the 19th century Germany was Britain's economic, military and diplomatic rival not its admirer.

Italy and Japan were left traumatized by the debacle in Adwa (1896) and the Triple Intervention (1895) respectively. The former found the courage to embark on a large-scale colonial campaign again in 1911 when it occupied Libya. The shock of the unprecedented defeat of a western nation in the hands of some underdeveloped barbarians haunted the Italians until the Second Italo-Ethiopian War (1936). The Japanese did not experience a military humiliation of similar proportions. However, the arrogance and meddling of the European powers in the nation's politics was unbearable for generations to come. The Triple Intervention stripped Japan of its "rightful" gains, terrorized the nation and convinced the majority of the elites that further military buildup and a future confrontation with the West was unavoidable. Both states reluctantly and in collaboration with the Great Powers participated in the quelling of the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901). Around the time that Italy annexed Libya, Tōkyō after decades of machinations colonized Korea (1910). Almost 15 years after their humiliation both nations felt strong enough to dynamically pursue by themselves their

⁸⁹ The assertion that there was a consensus for imperial adventure within the Japanese government in the 1870s is open to challenge. Regarding the Korean debate the Meiji government took the road of caution and prudence despite voices desiring an aggressive policy involving military action.

long awaiting, sidelined but still coveted territorial aims. Libya was strategically “Italy’s fourth shore” and Korea “a dagger pointed at the heart of Japan”. It is difficult to imagine how the acquisition of the Moluccas Island complex as the Italian explorer Giovanni Emilio Cerruti put forward (1870) or of New Caledonia as envisioned by the explorer Komakichi Tomiyama (1891-1892) would be crucial to the metropolis’ security. Likewise, what was distant Eritrea’s strategic importance for Rome? How did Taiwan complement Japan’s strategic security? In the 19th century both nations could only contend themselves with what the colonial powers deemed unprofitable. 19th century Italy and Japan shared the fixation for colonies; they colonized for the sake of colonizing. They rushed to obtain something, anything before the opening of the Suez Canal or the completion of the Trans-Siberian Railway that extended the Great Powers’ hegemony over every piece of land still available. Rome’s and Tōkyō’s early expansion was not necessarily interwoven with the creation of naval bases and military outposts.

Therefore, the social (overpopulation), economic and strategic theories that many embraced to explain the early Japanese and Italian colonialisms are of secondary importance. Still we cannot exclude these theories altogether since they were very influential among 19th century policy makers. For example, some people believed that Taiwan or Eritrea were able to accommodate the surplus population. The facts however, demonstrated that these locations at least initially were inhospitable, unprofitable, and from a diplomatic and militarily point of view more of a burden than an asset to the state. So there has to be another explanation as to why the Japanese and Italians chose to acquire and hold their first colonial possessions.

Let us now turn our attention to the humanitarian ideology of the “civilization mission” that was used to justify their expansion in Africa and Asia. Both conquerors propagandized their duty to develop and raise the intellectual level and living conditions of their new subjects. Based on Social Darwinism and paternalistic racism they treated the “barbarians” as politically immature and culturally savage who were in need of a western style modernization. Roads, schools and hospitals were proofs of the colonizers benevolent rule. Even until this day some scholars, sympathetic to Italy’s past colonial rule, justify it by asserting that their nation administered its overseas positions in a subtler and more benevolent manner compared to the other powers. Although this claim is unfounded, Italy’s alleged aversion to despotic and military rule made the myth, as Angelo Del Boca described it, appear plausible to some. In reality as Del Boca illustrated in his book *Italiani brava gente? Un mito duro a morire*, Italian colonial domination was as harsh and arbitrary as any other type of colonial rule. In Africa, Rome evoked its Christian and humanitarian tradition in colonizing backward races; missionaries spread the gospel and the superior Italian culture. It was in Africa where the Italian liberal state, until recently the “usurper”, and the Vatican made finally peace and collaborated to expand their influence and interests. The Japanese colonial administrators on their part, in absence of an instrument as influential as the Christian evangelic missions, had to downplay the importance of religion. Although their cultural superiority was undisputed they sought to find common traits in order to bring the colonizers and the colonized closer. Pan-Asianism rhetoric, the doctrine that exalted the

common racial and cultural features of the East Asian nations, was stressed by Tōkyō in Taiwan and later in Korea to present its rule as superior.⁹⁰ In this sense Japan's colonialism is regional, peripheral and unique; kinship between the master race and the lesser ones within the empire never existed in western overseas colonialism. This affinity made the theory of assimilation appear feasible. In any case, the Italians and Japanese shared the need to project their rule to domestic and international audiences as distinct and benevolent in contrast to western oppression. Domestically both societies were subjected and partially hypnotized by the official nationalistic propaganda. It was a way to divert them from the problems at home such as the infringement on civil rights and economic difficulties. Memorial services, military marches, monuments, poems, public gatherings, eulogies for the dead that fought against barbarian obscurantism were all used to promote the idea of empire. For example, the moving legends of Colonel De Cristoforis' (1887) and Sergeant Sakurai's (1895) desperate fight to the end against superior forces were glorified as acts of patriotism, selflessness and courage in both countries.

Both nations in the 19th century were lacking colonial experience. The governments in a state of constant confusion did not have a concrete policy or direction for their first colonies. For decades Rome was unsure on how to exploit Eritrea (agricultural-commercial-military colony); in Tōkyō the diet was similarly divided on Taiwan's legal frame (application of the constitution-law 63). After 10 year of domination politicians still could not agree on how to call Taiwan. As until recently they had been apprehensive themselves about encroachment from the West and willing to disassociate Japan's benevolent rule from European colonial oppression many of them did not use the term colony to describe Taiwan. Early Japan and Italy were in dire need of modernization, economic reorganization and domestic development. Many at home argued that the domination over foreign territories was an unnecessary luxury for the state finances. When colonial administration proved to be a burden rather than a profit and the bodies of colonial troops started piling up they urged their governments to sell or abandon their first colonies. When Eritrea and Taiwan were pacified and made, if not profitable, less burdensome under the administration of Ferdinando Martini and Gotō Shinpei respectively in the eve of the 20th century these voices were silenced. Back in the last quarter of the 19th century certain parts of the early Italian and Japan societies were opposing imperialism but on different grounds. For example, Italian socialists and others, influenced by Italy's ultimately triumphant struggle for independence, saw London's campaign against Egypt (1882) as an infringement on the principle of self-determination. In Tōkyō it was not the ideas of liberty that gave rise to a popular sentiment of solidarity and sympathy to Orabi Pasha's movement rather than the fact that early Japan, under the semi-colonial system of the unequal treaties, could

⁹⁰ Ching, *Tracing contradictions*, p. 10.

suffer the same fate as Egypt;⁹¹ economic subjugation to European interests and military interventions went hand in hand.

The author's belief is that the driving force behind Japan's and Italy's early tendency towards expansion was psychological, latent, and mental rather than precisely assessed geostrategic considerations. It was anxiety; their ruling elites' partially justifiable psychological insecurity, their feeling of vulnerability, their siege mentality. Military feebleness, humiliations, political sidelining, centuries of political fragmentation were well imprinted in their psych. The enlightened Italian and Japanese policy makers had to make the experiment of their newborn nation states work at any cost. So their genuine concern and main stimulus was to safeguard their survival rather than to expand their power base or seek strategic outposts. Colonies could act as buffer zones to protect the homeland. Semi-colonized Japan was arguably the target of western economic penetration and aggression. Early Italy too had reasons to feel that its unification after the nation's great sacrifices was in danger having to deal with the stressing Vatican problem which was fueled for decades by the catholic powers, and bordering hostile and menacing neighbours. Both nations patiently ceded, collaborated, even served the interests of others since direct confrontation or standing up for their interests every time an international crisis arose was unthinkable. More time was needed; modernization and military buildup were the priorities of these states until the redeeming moment came when they could finally carry out their own dynamic and reactionary foreign policies. Decades after Italy's and Japan's unification when the danger of foreign encroachment was diminished both ruling elites irrationally harboured the same defensive ideas of the underprivileged latecomer, the Darwinian struggle for survival and the demand for a fair compensation, a place in the sun. Policy makers in 19th century Germany were obsessed with their nation's strategic security too, as it was a newborn state among potentially hostile empires. However, Bismarckian diplomacy and the nation's industrial and military capacity rapidly made Berlin the arbiter of the international system not its stooge. Besides Germany, the latecomers did not have the means to make their voices heard. They had to consolidate their still fragile independence and promote their national interests in another indirect way.

Another incentive towards overseas expansion was the quest for diplomatic recognition. Numerous affirmations about the strength of the army, the benevolent mission, the better colonial administration, the nations' ancient glory and about courage, heroism and entrepreneurial spirit attest to the fact that leadership and common people (merchants, soldiers, journalists) alike were obsessed with raising their nation's prestige. Imperialism, as a requirement for a modern developed state and a trend among the powers of the time conferred prestige; it was an instrument to guarantee the latecomers' admission to the illustrious private club of the Great Powers.

⁹¹ Richard Albert Bradshaw, *Japan and European colonialism in Africa, 1800-1937*, Ph.D Dissertation, Ohio University, (1992) p. 115.

Imitation was the quickest path to prominence. Japan, in racial and political terms, was seen as a backward almost barbarian nation by the westerners and was treated similarly. Its modernization and recognition as sovereign state was arguably more challenging than early Italy's. The Italians enjoyed international appreciation due to the legacy of the Roman Empire, the Papacy and the Renaissance. However, the new born Italian state was not taken seriously by the Great Powers, its interests were marginalized and its immigrants abroad were maltreated like the Japanese and Chinese in America. The decision to improve their standing hastily directed them towards imperialism, opportunism, aggression and the mismanagement of their first colonies. As soon as they formed their new states they both carelessly embarked on expansionist schemes. The immature early Japanese and Italian diplomacy rapidly espoused the notions and practices of imperialism as implemented by the most advanced nations of the west. Their politicians learnt that colonialism and military dominance were indicators of modern civilization. "If one impartially compares our country with European countries, we are...abreast of Italy" exclaimed the Japanese periodical *Kokumin no Tomo* in 1891.⁹²

This is why despite the need of reorganization and the lacking means Meiji Japan seriously considered attacking Korea (1873) and finally sought to colonize Taiwan (1874) whereas Italy, disguised behind a private company occupied an African village called Assab (1869) and organized a series of exploration missions in search of a colony in Africa and the Pacific. Later, even as officially recognized colonial powers, humiliating incidents continued to embarrass Rome and Tōkyō. For example both nations were probably the only ones to have their demands upon a weakened and demoralized China rejected. While the Great Powers were "carving up the Chinese melon" the Italian claims on San Mun, backed up by an ultimatum, were rebuffed twice (1899). Similarly when Tōkyō demanded railway rights in Fukien (1900), in the same way that the Germans extracted railway rights in Shandong, the answer was negative. Collaborating, pleasing and imitating the Great Powers in search of prestige spurred these second-rate states to dispatch their troops in Beijing to quell the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901). The campaign marks a point of convergence in the same time and place of the two phenomena. Rome had few citizens and negligible commercial interests in China; Tōkyō having re-approached Beijing after the Sino-Japanese war and unwilling to witness the dismemberment of the neighbouring empire in the hands of the West was unwilling to participate. However, both joined the Great Powers only to prove that they were no longer puppets or lesser actors in the international system. In Beijing they projected the image of equal, potent and modern states whose interests and voice had to finally be respected by everyone.

Thus, the principal aim of the early Italian and Japanese colonialism was to increase their prestige. Prestige at the time was synonym of Great Power status and therefore security. The international system of the 19th century was carved into two categories: the potent centre, that had the right to exist, expand, civilize, rule, and

⁹² Samuels, *Machiavelli's children*, p. 21.

decide the fate of lesser states and the periphery which had no voice and could be penetrated, subjugated eradicated at the centre's will. Possession of colonies and militarism were part of the modernization process, as was the creation of railroads and battleships, adopted by the latecomers to join the international strategic-economic contest as equal members and to impress the powers. Colonialism for Rome and Tōkyō was not only their ticket to a higher standing but to safety as well. A nation that possessed colonies and proved able to subdue barbarians was arguably part of the world's elite as it was demonstrating the virtues of the great nations by efficiently administrating and developing backward regions. Being part of the international system as one of the world's prominent state was the ultimate goal of the Italian and Japanese governments. The principle of the balance of power, as embraced by the major European states after the Congress of Vienna, guaranteed peace and safety for the Great Powers. That meant that although African, Asian or secondary European nations could be colonized and absorbed, the system's arbiters were beyond reproach. Of course, wars between potent states could erupt but the total annihilation of one by another was politically and practically inconceivable in the 19th century. As it has been already mentioned, the first colonies did not complement Italy's and Japan's respective strategic security. Indirectly though, Eritrea's and Taiwan's possession conferred a sense of parity, acceptance and safety. Peer recognition meant that Rome and Tōkyō, were equals and thus not possible targets of European aggression. Eritrea was one of the poorest regions of Africa. Taiwan was rich in national resources but the island's tropical conditions and hostile population obliged the Japanese to invest heavily in money and to lose many men. Despite these predicaments, Italy and Japan opportunistically expanded the moment they found the chance. They did it without reservations; the colonies' value and administration were only secondary issues. They just needed the titles of property.

The Italian and Meiji governments imitating the imperial powers chose to participate in the race for territorial concessions. Military limitations, economic strains and dissident voices, mainly in Italy, meant that if the ruling classes wanted to implement a programme of territorial expansion they had to do it discreetly. Fearful of western opposition the Italian government dispatched its troops to occupy Massaua (1885) in secrecy. Rome acquired its very first overseas territory, Assab hidden behind the Rubattino Shipping Company. The same company was also used by the state to interfere with the French plans in Tunisia (1880) and to transport Italian troops in Africa. In the same manner the Meiji government sponsored the Mitsubishi firm and made it practically an official state instrument. Mitsubishi ships were used during the first Japanese expedition in Taiwan (1874), which was supposed to be undercover, and during the Satsuma Rebellion (1877). In order to confront foreign maritime competition in their waters and to implement their expansionistic policies both governments decided to support a private company. Their similar precarious financial state meant that subsidies and support were available for only one firm.

Late 19th century Italy and Japan encountered the opposition of two vast but politically and militarily decadent empires opposing their territorial aspirations. Rome almost immediately after its unification set its sights on Tunisia, Libya (Cyrenaica) and the African coast of the Red Sea, all of them under the nominal suzerainty of the Ottoman sultan while the East African interior belonged in principal to the Ethiopian emperor. Tōkyō on the other hand, clashed with Qing China that did not have a modern perception of sovereignty, over the Ryūkyūs, Taiwan and Korea. Japan and Italy as modern nation states espoused international law and European practices whereas the Ottoman Empire, Ethiopia and China were still employing an obsolete legal perception of ownership. The principle of effective occupation, as defined at the Berlin Conference (1884-1885), was adopted by the colonizing states to formalize the rules of the imperialistic scramble. In accordance with this principle Rome and Tōkyō claimed that the empires standing in their way were unable to secure “peace and security” in the above cited territories and thus they had the right to claim them. The adherence to the old perceptions of sovereignty by the Ottomans, the Ethiopians and the Chinese explains the lengthy diplomatic controversy over the possession of Assab and Taiwan.

This political backwardness coupled with the obvious disorganization and military feebleness in combination with western contempt and racial prejudices made these empires appear as easy prey to the Italians and Japanese. The establishment of the first colonies was not a product of meticulous and coordinated planning. Italian Eritrea and Japanese Taiwan were created incidentally; Rome after humiliations and failures to capture any region in North Africa found diplomatic support from London and “vacant” areas in East Africa. Japan on the other hand, unable to secure Korea or Liadong after its victory over China (1895), demanded any Chinese territory to satisfy the militaristic and expansionist circles at home. The magnitude of Japan’s triumph convinced the ruling elites that besides a large indemnity, the nation’s territorial enlargement was attainable. However, lack of administrative preparedness and the immediate resort to the unsophisticated military rule proved that Rome’s and Tōkyō’s presence in East Africa and Taiwan was circumstantial. Someone can argue that the latecomers’ imperial expansion was both preemptive and reactionary to the powers’ colonialism.

What is certain is that soon after the colonization of Eritrea (1890) and Taiwan (1895) Italy and Japan sought to further expand.⁹³ Both nations did not simply annex

⁹³ Italy and Japan were finally colonial powers. Therefore, they had to safeguard their possessions and even expand them. In an 1886 parliamentary session Prime Minister Crispi stressed: “We have been at Assab. We refused to turn Assab into a military base. We must therefore, defend Assab from our position in Massaua”. This affirmation is reminiscent of Fukuzawa’s declaration after the annexation of Taiwan: “...now that Taiwan has become already our territory, we must defend it like our mother country and must not lose one inch of our land...”. Both sides agreed on the beneficial results that overseas campaign had on their military preparedness. Foreign Minister Mancini on the eve of Massaua’s occupation hailed the useful exercise for the Italian armed forces. In 1874, LeGendre claimed that the campaign against the aborigines offered experience and training to Tōkyō’s armed forces.

these colonies but engaged in bloody warfare to consolidate their presence. The Italians the day after Massaua's capture, easily defeated the local tribes, incorporated their regions and pushed towards the interior until the clamorous collapse of 1896. From the beginning of their presence in Africa, they had been going after the big prize, Ethiopia. Easy victories increased the enthusiasm and appetite of the expansionists. Militarism and expansion became more attractive after the colonization of Eritrea and Somalia (1889); in the 1890s Ethiopia was surrounded, blockaded and gradually wore down by Rome's machinations. The grandiose aspiration of subjugating the whole of East Africa was unthinkable in the 1870s when Italy possessed the negligible colonial possession of Assab. To that end, Eritrea became a "military colony".⁹⁴ The Japanese had to fight almost immediately after establishing their presence in their first colony as well: initially against the Republic of Taiwan, later against the insurgents, and until 1915 against the island's indigenous population. It was from the new colony that the Japanese sought to expand commercially and politically in Southern China. The city of Amoy, opposite to Taiwan, was targeted first and was captured briefly (1900) before the withdrawal of the Japanese troops in the face of foreign protests. Acquiring Taiwan and later Korea seemed to complete the strategy of China's encirclement. Therefore, we can comprehend that the function and purpose of Japan's and Italy's first colonies was to serve as a bridgehead for further expansion against China and Ethiopia respectively. It was atavism as Schumpeter put it; conquest, aggression, effortless and predatory grabbing of foreign resources and lands. Taiwan and Eritrea acquired previously for reasons connected to international diplomacy and prestige were soon after administrated as army camps and were transformed into advanced bases for the military.

Let us now examine the similarities of these nations' early colonial rule. The lack of funds as a result of the two countries' immature capitalism was evident at home and in their first colonies as well. During the first years of colonial rule investments were scant, private interest inexistent, and the authorities, having more urgent priorities, neglected the local populations. Rome's subsidies were inadequate to transform Eritrea into a productive and hospitable area for Italian colonizers as Deputy Leopoldo Franchetti had envisioned. Similarly, the Japanese government, due to the lack of private entrepreneurial spirit, had to invest heavily in Taiwan but as we saw, crucial sectors such as colonial administration and public education suffered from the lack of capital. In both cases roads, hospitals and post offices were manufactured in accordance with the model of the modernizing and benevolent central state intervention. In practice these improvements aimed at ensuring the colonialists' domination for the years to come. In any case the colonies were military spearheads. Economically they were to be exploited as bases for agricultural foodstuff; huge industrial and infrastructural investments were not initially encouraged. While the dominant states put forward a

⁹⁴ This affirmation was published by the official periodical of the Society for the Commercial Exploration of Africa in November 1904. See Alberto Aquarone, "La ricerca di una politica coloniale dopo Adua. Speranze e delusioni fra politica ed economia" in *Publications de l'École française de Rome*, no. 1, Vol. 54, (1981), p. 300.

plan of industrialization and economic development at home their first colonies were to remain underdeveloped. Nevertheless the colonies were a burden for state finances. During the first years at least, colonial administration was draining the national treasuries while the colonies' trade deficit was a constant source of anxiety for the colonial policy makers. It is not a coincidence that colonialism scholars used almost the same terms to describe Japan's and Italy's early colonial endeavours. The esteemed historian Francesco Surdich accurately referred to the Italian imperialism as the "l'imperialismo straccione" (beggars' imperialism) whereas the Japanese historian Takahashi Kamekichi characterized Tōkyō's expansion as "petty imperialism" in Marxist terms, as has been already mentioned.⁹⁵

Obviously, a highly trained and skilled colonial bureaucracy was absent in nations without any experience in overseas ruling. Initially Eritrea and Taiwan were suffering from corruption, abuses and arbitrary rule that embarrassed Japan and Italy internationally. It was not until the governors Martini and Gotō took office in Eritrea and Taiwan respectively that a scientific, modern and beneficial policy of studying the customs of the colonized was more or less adopted. The local elites were taken in consideration in order to facilitate colonial rule. On some occasions in Italian Eritrea, religious leaders and nobility administrated justice in the name of Italy through local courts. Accordingly, in Taiwan some locals held positions in the administration and collaborated closely with the occupation forces. The act of religious freedom and civil laws for Assab (1882), as long as they were "compatible with the Italian legislation and civilization" passed by the Italian parliament is reminiscent of Gotō's policy of surveying and maintaining local customs in Taiwan (1901). As already seen, Tōkyō eventually chose not to enforce metropolitan laws to Taiwan despite its proclamation for equal treatment and cultural assimilation. In the Italian case although the rights of the indigenous were naturally encroached upon, the legal codes of the metropolis were applied to the possessions. At least in theory the metropolis' laws were uniformly enforced with some revisions. However, in Eritrea much like in Taiwan different legislation was applicable for the indigenous and foreign population; the locals initially were subject to the ancestral customary law. In both cases the national parliaments were kept in the dark and were bypassed by the colonial authorities and military circles. Taiwan's legislation was shaped in Taihoku not in the diet according to the famous law no. 69 (1896). Similarly to Taiwan's unpreparedness to be incorporated and administrated as part of the Japanese mainland, Eritrea too was considered a colonial and not a national territory by Prime Minister Crispi. Using this stratagem Crispi did not bring Eritrea's inaugural law to the parliament for debate (1890).

In order to rapidly achieve their goal, project their possessions as pacified, profitable and developed for reasons of prestige, the early colonial authorities marginalized any kind of civil administration. Immediate results could be achieved by utilizing strict military rule and terror. The Japanese and Italian urgency to appear as equal and successful colonizers explains their eagerness to silence any opposition at

⁹⁵ Hoston, "Marxism and Japanese Expansionism", p. 11.

home and in their first colonies. In both cases we detect the prevalence of the military authority over civilian rule. Eritrea and Taiwan after their acquisition were destined to become military bases where civil rights and dissident voices had no place. In fact these colonies were in constant state of war, under martial law, administered always by generals and admirals and serving the military's purposes and interests. Governors in both cases pledged their loyalty to the military, almost ignoring the national parliaments. For the military officers serving in the colonies the politicians from their comfortable seats of their assemblies in Rome and Tōkyō, utterly ignorant about the warlike conditions of these distant places, were not suitable to enact laws for Eritrea and Taiwan or administer them. Lacking the funds to set up an efficient judicial system Taiwan's courts were initially entrusted to army officials. Special "temporary" courts were immediately organized (1895) not to provide a fair trial to any Taiwanese insurgent but to punish them as criminals. Taihoku unsupervised and in haste, put to death and deported thousands of native troublemakers. The Italian military tribunals were also extremely harsh: execution, imprisonment, penal sentences, fines, flogging and deportation were the most common verdicts during the first phase of Rome's domination.

Both colonies' administration was authoritarian and the governors ruled them despotically and virtually unrestrained as their personal fiefs. The royal act of 1891 gave excessive powers to Eritrea's governors and rendered them directly accountable only to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As a result, the governors had full administrative, juridical, political and military authority; they issued laws, established courts and imposed new taxes almost arbitrarily. Japanese legislation (1895-1897) gave to Taiwan's governor-generals' considerable authority too. They had the right to summon the military forces of the colony, to deport any dissidents, to establish courts and so on. The never-ending state of war in the first colonies provided the governors and thus the military with "urgent" and enlarged powers for years. During these periods lawlessness, oppressive and abusive police action, coupled with human rights violations, scandals, mismanagement, confusion and even mass murders systematically took place but were covered up to avoid international condemnation. In Taiwan any interference by civilians in the colony's military establishment, such as the one made by Judge Takenori Takano, was bluntly brushed aside (1897). Takano's criticism about the army using excessive force, extorting money and intimidating civilians was suppressed by the colonial authorities. Spending the limited available funds on the colony's police and armed forces instead of on the education of the colonial subjects prompted the first Chief of the Education Bureau, Isawa Shūji to resign in protest (1898). The island became a miniature police state as the result of the intensification of the hokō system (1898), brimming with prisons; the army and the police enjoyed great authority and manned the colonial administration en masse. One of the most heinous acts was the mass murder of 275 surrendered ex brigands (1902) organised by the higher echelons of the colonial administration in their effort to "pacify" the locals. Moreover entire villages were set on fire and many Taiwanese, innocent or not, were murdered instantly by the occupation forces or sentenced to death as "brigands" after

hasty and inept military tribunals. In practise awe and fear was employed in contrast to the rhetoric of the benevolent civilizing mission. On one occasion more than 4,000 houses were burned to the ground in Yunlin (1896); the islands' aboriginal inhabitants also got to know Tōkyō's colonial brutality first by being under siege by a restrictive and armed guard line and in the 20th century by being the direct targets of the Japanese army's purges. In Eritrea it was the African tribes that suffered by the irresponsible and overweening rule of the army. The Italians immediately after the occupation of Massaua (1885) organized campaigns in the interior and clashed with the local tribes initiating a period of turmoil and bloodshed. Military brutality in order to silence the local opposition was employed by the two latecomers.⁹⁶ The best example of the civil element's subordination to the rule of the army is Franchetti's case. Leopoldo Franchetti's well intended project of ensuring a fairer land reapportionment which would be beneficial for Italians and Africans alike, was rejected by governors Gandolfi and Baratieri that were unwilling to see their absolute authority compromised by a mere Deputy of the national parliament (1895). When Ferdinando Martini assumed the colony's administration (1897) as the Eritrea's first civil governor, he lamented the heavy expenditure on huge barracks and army supplies when in the same time basic infrastructure was still lacking. The claims about subtler, more humane rule and the spread of Italian culture in Africa were effortlessly discredited by the Livraghi-Cagnassi scandal (1891). These colonial officials murdered hundreds of natives with the administration's backing (governors Orero and Baldissera) and avoided capture. In the Italian prison of Nocera, which operated from 1887 to 1941, unruly elements, political prisoners and Ethiopian patriots were detained under horrible conditions; many of them succumbed to hunger and diseases.

Being transferred from the mainland to these colonies seemed like a relegation for the Italian and Japanese servicemen. Those few that voluntarily settled in early Eritrea and Taiwan were looked down upon by their fellow nationals back home. Indeed, many of them were mere opportunists in search of easy money and adventure. Measures were taken by Gotō and Martini to restrict the intake of lawless and unproductive immigrants that would lower the rulers' prestige in the colonies. A large part of the Italian and Japanese society was indifferent to their states' colonial undertaking. Colonialism was a secondary, distant issue, a leverage and a means to put pressure upon the government for those that did not embrace the imperial rhetoric: in Rome the assemblies formed in the aftermath of the Dogali defeat (1887) protested against the government's domestic, foreign and religious policies; in Tōkyō, advocates of the Freedom and People's Rights Movement demanded democratic reform by criticizing their government's foreign policy. Nevertheless, despite their similar stance and struggle for popular rights the socialists in both parliaments were too fragmented and weak to impede the colonial frenzy.

⁹⁶ Ken Ishida, "Il problema dei crimini di guerra in Giappone e in Italia. Tre punti di vista comparati" in *Memoria e Rimozione: i crimini di Guerra del Giappone e dell'Italia*, ed. G. Contini, F. Focardi, M. Petricioli, (Rome 2010), p. 19.

Another common element was the use of fraud and deceit by the Italians and Japanese in their quest for recognition. Rome's envoy Pietro Antonelli tricked the Emperor of Ethiopia into signing a document that surrendered his country's sovereignty to the Italian king (1889). In a similarly deceitful manner the statesman Soejima Taneomi declared without any proof after returning from his diplomatic mission to China that Beijing had agreed to allow a Japanese expeditional force in its territory of Taiwan (1873). As any colonial expansion, Japan's and Italy's had a disruptive and destructive impact to the economic and social development of the colonized. The Italian presence in East Africa created new boundaries and identities to serve Rome's interests. This policy, like elsewhere in colonized Asia and Africa, fabricated false identities and divided or turned against each other entire ethnic groups. The bloody Eritrea-Ethiopia war of 1998-2000 erupted because of ongoing disputes about the border of these states, a demarcation undertaken by the Italian colonizers. In the same way the Japanese administrators shaped a new, distinct island identity that to this day is a source of tension, animosity and political crisis between China and Taiwan.⁹⁷

The great difference between the two expansionist phenomena is that Japan's first colonization effort is widely considered successful in 19th century imperialistic terms. Typical Japanese efficiency, exhaustive control, attention to detail and in depth social and economic policies through myriads of bureaus that penetrated almost every aspect of the colony's daily life was in total contrast to Rome's disorganization and near neglect of its colonial possessions. Furthermore, Tōkyō crushed China, subdued the rebels in Taiwan, and defeated Russia a major power (1905). On the other hand, the Italians, despite belonging to the supposedly "white superior race", were humiliated in the hands of a barbarian nation (1896). Adwa just like the Triple Intervention left deep scars. It should be noted that Ethiopia's and Japan's victories over western opponents gave hope to the oppressed and subjugated nations of the world.⁹⁸ They were third world countries providing an example to other "inferior" nations, whereas beaten and humbled Rome was considered part of the culturally superior imperialistic West. Italy and Japan were not equal to begin with despite their similar economic and social conditions in 1870s-1890s and their struggle to raise their status to first rate powers. First and foremost, Italy was a European nation-state. As such, Rome enjoyed extraterritoriality in the semi-colonized Japan as other European nations had until 1894; early modern Japan appeared to western eyes more as a primitive inferior race rather than a potential peer. In this way Japan's adoption of western imperialistic schemes and its early colonialism are unique developments, incomparable to the expansion of any other state.

In any case, it is obvious that the one case that bears a resemblance to the Japanese colonialism is that of the equivalent Italian undertaking; due to their common economic weakness both Italy and Japan are deemed by the scholars as "anomalies".

⁹⁷ Ching, "Becoming 'Japanese'", p. 37.

⁹⁸ J. Calvitt Clarke III, *Alliance of the Colored Peoples: Ethiopia and Japan before World War II*, (Oxford, 2011), p. 2.

Two factors made Tōkyō's bid for colonies even more eccentric: Japanese racial and cultural affiliation to its imperial subjects and the nation's definition as uncivilized by the West that made it appear as a possible target of European aggression along with the other inferior Asian and African nations. For this reason the Japanese in their first colony did everything they could to project their cultural superiority and modernity in contrast to the Taiwanese backwardness. Western style architecture, western uniforms and western tactics of enhancing imperial prestige and commanding awe were employed to distinguish the position of the rulers from the ruled. The Italians acted similarly not only because they also imitated foreign colonial patterns but because these traits were part of their own cultural heritage.

14. Bibliography

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